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## **THE FAMILY**

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# THE FAMILY

Its Organization and Disorganization

By

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*Author of "Family Disorganization" and  
"Domestic Discord"*



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**TO**  
**ERNEST W. BURGESS**



## PREFACE

This book has grown out of two convictions on the part of the author: first, that problems of the family are to be understood only after a thorough grounding in the nature of the family experience; and, second, that the contemporary family may be studied in the same objective spirit which characterizes research in the natural sciences. The point of view is frankly that of social psychology, and emphasis is placed throughout upon the research aspects of the problem. It is quite logical, therefore, that the final chapter should consist of a series of research problems, classified in terms of their fundamental nature rather than in conformity with the chapter organization of the book.

While the book has been designed as a text for college courses in the family, the author has tried to make the contents sufficiently readable to be enjoyed by anyone who is interested in the family and wishes to understand its nature and organization. How successfully he has accomplished this he must of course leave to the reader.

Some of the sections, particularly on the organization of the family, are obviously speculative and should be considered as presenting hypotheses for further research. The speculative nature of these sections arises out of the fact that little or no research has been done upon these aspects, and the author felt that more service could be done to the family researcher by going boldly ahead upon the basis of casual observation, rather than being content to summarize the literature, as is so often done in textbooks. These sections represent, accordingly, an attempt to stake out new



fields for study, and to set up a series of hypotheses for guidance in family research.

For the assistance of the instructor a series of suggested readings follows each chapter. The author has attempted to make these readings as representative as possible, and yet keep within the limits of the needs of the classroom. The selection is naturally subject to criticism and revision. Further readings may be added, if required, by reference to the bibliography in the Appendix. It will be observed that in almost every instance reference has been made to a chapter or chapters in Reuter and Runner, *The Family: Source Materials for the Study of Family and Personality*. This is, the author believes, the best single reference book available. It is recommended, accordingly, to those who do not find it possible or desirable to utilize the wider range indicated in the suggested readings.

The author wishes to express his indebtedness to Professor Ernest W. Burgess, to whom the book is dedicated, for the point of view, invaluable counsel, and training, especially in the field of the family. He is also similarly under obligations to Professors Ellsworth Faris and Robert E. Park in the broader fields of social psychology and sociology. For constant encouragement, stimulus, and assistance the author is under obligation to Harriet R. Mowrer.

ERNEST R. MOWRER

EVANSTON, ILL.  
September 15, 1931

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**PART I**  
**INTRODUCTION**



## CHAPTER I

### THE FAMILY CRISIS

No problem in modern life so challenges the attention of thoughtful students of society as does the family crisis, if one may interpret the tenor of recent writings upon the subject. One group heralds the present situation as the beginning of a new day in which all the old restraints of family mores will be thrown aside; the other group is alarmed lest the most treasured of institutions may disappear to bring havoc upon modern civilization. Both, however, agree that the family in America is at a turning of the way.

It is customary, of course, for the reformer to represent the present as a crisis situation. And, indeed, there is a certain amount of truth in the interpretation of life as a series of crises. Reflection about social forms and institutions itself indicates some converging of attention, some critical attitude, some taking of stock. Such an interpretation, however, leads easily to exaggeration if it emphasizes alone the rhythmic phases of social life and neglects its continuity.

No one will deny, of course, that the family is changing. But that the changes which are facing the family are any more revolutionary than at other periods of history may be more illusionary than real. Idealization of the past is a common error in the attempt to interpret social life. Change in those institutions which have acquired a sacredness through the generations is ever the anathema of those who would preserve the old order, just as the slowness of change

is the rallying point around which gather those who would hasten the millennium.

In a broader sense, however, the family has always been changing. Ever since man first began adjusting his social life to his needs, the family has been changing. Much of the change for a long time was unintended and unperceived. The idea of the family as a changing institution is indeed relatively new, growing out of wider knowledge of other peoples and greater attention to the changes in social life.

And yet there may be some basis for the feeling that the family is changing more rapidly at the present time than at any period in the past. The unprecedented growth of capitalistic organization since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution has produced changes in many phases of social life with unusual rapidity. It would be a miracle if the family escaped.

In fact, it is this phenomenal change in social customs which is the most striking aspect of modern life. Mechanical change has gone on, of course, at what has often seemed like lightning rapidity, and everyone has become somehow to expect such transformations. But when established customs and practices are called into question, it strikes the ordinary man as somehow unusual and disconcerting. And yet one has only to go back to the beginning of the present century to see changes which are in many respects revolutionary in character.

A few of these changes will indicate the general breakdown of the old social patterns. Young women no longer go about with chaperons. They are inclined to feel insulted if they are required to have a chaperon at a party. In colleges where the chaperon is still a formal requirement for dances and parties, the tendency is to see that the proper

persons are selected—persons who themselves are as unconventional in their conduct as are those they are supposed to control. Lipstick and rouge have become accepted as a necessary part of the woman's toilet. Cigarette-smoking on the part of women is to be seen everywhere by all classes. Men no longer relinquish their seats in street cars to strange women. Sexual irregularity is no longer the prerogative of the male.

Evolution has become an accepted doctrine in colleges and universities in spite of organized resistance in certain sections of the country. The Bible is no longer looked upon as the final authority in the regulation of conduct, even in many theological seminaries, but instead is considered a cultural heritage. Even in rural areas dancing has come to be an accepted form of entertainment where previously it had been considered the "instigation of the devil."

These simple illustrations furnish eloquent testimony of the current trend toward change in modern life—a change perhaps unprecedented, but yet in keeping with the transformations on the mechanical side. These changes have had, necessarily, a profound effect upon the family. And while it is generally considered that there has been considerable lag in family customs, the discontent and confusion is only thereby aggravated. In urban areas, especially, this confusion has grown to the greatest dimensions.

Some of the most eloquent evidence of confusion in family life may be seen in the contradictory assumptions underlying the proposals for reform. Part of these attempt to give new life to the family forms of the past. Writers from this point of view often deny that the family does, or should, change. They look toward reinforcing the forms of an earlier age which to them embody the ideal elements of family



life. These programs may, accordingly, be called conservative. In contrast to those of the conservative group are programs calling for a clearing of the ground and beginning anew upon the assumption that there is little or nothing in the old arrangements worth saving. These writers point out the inadequacies of the old forms as showing their lack of potentiality for functioning in modern life. Such programs may be called radical. In between these two extremes is a third point of view which emphasizes the need for further research and is hesitant, on the whole, to make suggestions looking toward reformation until it can be more sure of its basis in fact. This is the point of view of science.

#### PROGRAMS OF REFORM

One of the most common types of conservative programs consists in calling for a return to certain practices which, without notice, have slipped into disuse. Clergymen, for example, have from time to time reiterated that church weddings would tend to prevent unhappy marriages. Publication of the banns has also found much support, on the part of both the clergy and laymen.<sup>1</sup> Some assert that what is needed is a return to the elementary teachings of Christianity.<sup>2</sup> Still others demand legislative reforms such as will keep the family intact—most commonly along the lines of further restrictions upon marriage and divorce.

<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., Thwing, *The Family: An Historical and Social Study*, p. 216.

<sup>2</sup> The task of the reformer, according to Lofthouse, is to seek to restore and to preserve "that attitude of mind which unites a man first with those who are nearest to him," and to perfect in a small circle "those virtues which can then expand over a larger area." He can do this by reviving certain Christian conceptions, namely, that (1) the real wealth of any community consists in its men and women, healthy, happy, and loving one another; (2) love means service; (3) life consists in the conquest of the world.—*Ethics and the Family*, pp. 362-74

Another favorite type of program may be called the "recipe" for family concord, or the "ten commandments of marriage." This sort of program consists of a series of commands or rules by which one is to regulate his conduct. "Do not be extravagant," for example, is one of the ten commandments for women, in one series of this sort. For men a complementary command is given, "Be generous according to your means."<sup>1</sup>

Other remedies of this "Pollyanna" type may be mentioned briefly. The United States Department of Commerce not long ago published a pamphlet which proposed home ownership as the basis of family life. Other reformers have pointed out the need for co-operation between husband and wife; still others have asserted that domestic science in the schools, moral training, greater emphasis upon religious training, and the withdrawal of the "Bringing-Up-Father" type of comics from the newspapers will prevent many unhappy marriages.

It is apparent that the assumptions underlying these

<sup>1</sup> The other nine commandments for women are: (1) Keep your home clean. (2) Do not permit your person to become unattractive. (3) Do not receive attentions from other men. (4) Do not resent reasonable discipline of children by their father. (5) Do not spend too much time with your mother. (6) Do not accept advice from the neighbors or stress too greatly even that of your own family concerning the management of your domestic affairs. (7) Do not disparage your husband. (8) Smile. Be attentive to little things. (9) Be tactful. Be feminine.

For men, the remaining commandments are: (1) Do not interfere with a woman in the management of purely domestic affairs. (2) Be cheerful, even though sometimes it may tax you to the utmost. (3) Be considerate. (4) Make love to your wife; continue to be her sweetheart. (5) Do not scold. (6) Establish your own home; if possible, remote from your wife's and your own immediate family. (7) Do not keep a lodger. (8) Cultivate neatness and personal cleanliness. (9) Be kind and just to your children. For source consult Mowrer, *Family Disorganization*, p. 10.

large number of scientists who have been associated with the movement.

The eugenic program is based upon the assumption that human progress has been the result of accidental improvement in the human stock through the mechanism of heredity. The family to the eugenist is an institution primarily for breeding of better human stock. The program of this group consists, therefore, in controlling human matings in such a way as to produce better offspring, both physically and mentally. All other aspects of family life are considered subsidiary to this aim. Thus the program of the eugenists represents in some respects the logical antithesis of that of the radical group, since it proposes the abandonment of individual wishes in marriage relations in favor of producing a "sound" stock.<sup>1</sup>

More important from the standpoint of control of family relations is the viewpoint of students of the family who assert that any fundamental program of reform must be based upon a thorough understanding of the social situation in which the family operates. Just as the family cannot be expected to continue performing functions which are no

<sup>1</sup> Even the eugenists dare not run directly against the current in their pronouncements. The following statement represents an attempt to proclaim the importance of breeding sound stock without too much flaunting the shibboleth of romantic love:

"Pure love between the sexes should be proclaimed as the noblest thing on earth, and the bearing and rearing of children as amongst the highest of all human duties. *Some risks ought to be run in order to secure these joys and to fulfill these duties; and Cupid may well remain a little blind to all minor defects.* To promote these ways of regarding sexual problems and to show how often the moralist unknown to himself is in effect striving to better the racial qualities of future generations come well within the scope of our endeavors" (italics added).—Leonard Darwin, "The Aims and Methods of Eugenical Societies," *Eugenics, Genetics and the Family* ("Scientific Papers of the Second International Congress of Eugenics"), I, 12.

longer essential to group life, so it cannot be expected to serve purposes which are ambiguous or inadequately understood. One of the most perplexing problems with reference to family life in the modern city is: What sort of family relations is possible under present-day urban conditions? Solution of this problem, however, depends upon the solving of two subsidiary problems: (1) What has been the relationship between social conditions and the family form in the past? and (2) What are the peculiar conditions of the present to which the family needs to adjust?

#### THE ROOTS OF THE MODERN FAMILY

Like a great many American institutions, the modern family has its European background. And while in certain respects one can see the impress of ancient civilization and medieval tradition, the chief sources of American family practices are to be found in the Puritan movement, the Renaissance, and the Romantic movement.<sup>1</sup> It is true, of course, that cross-currents have been introduced into American life by the influx of immigrants from the south and east of Europe in recent years, but these have left little impression upon the general pattern rooted in the social customs of the earlier immigrants from the north and west.

It is, however, in the seventeenth century and the Puritan movement in which one finds the immediate sources of New England family institutions.<sup>2</sup> Northern colonial life had its

<sup>1</sup> "American family institutions," according to Calhoun, "are a resultant of three main factors: the complex of medieval tradition evolved thru the centuries on the basis of ancient civilization plus the usage of its barbarian successor; the economic transition from medieval landlordism to modern capitalism; and the influence of environment in an unfolding continent."—*A Social History of the American Family*, I, 13.

<sup>2</sup> See *ibid.*, I, 37.

genesis primarily in the standards and traditions of the middle class of the Puritan type. Even in the southern colonies the middle class was predominant, for the environment of the New World favored the standards of this class.

Perhaps the most striking aspects of the early American family were its patriarchal form and its attitude toward sex. The husband and father was in every respect the head of the household. Children deferred to the wishes of their elders, and good wives were expected to cater to the wants of their husbands. And though he might be ever so lenient as an autocrat, there was never any doubt but that final authority resided with the husband. His authority was upheld by both community opinion and the law of the time. Even the personal belongings of the wife, including money earned and property which she had before marriage, might be disposed of by the husband. Community opinion, however, forbade the husband's exercising an earlier English prerogative of punishing his wife in any way requiring the use of physical force.<sup>1</sup>

Children, likewise, were in every respect subordinate to the father. He had the right to all wages earned by them; might apprentice them at will; and in case of incorrigibility might use corporal punishment without restriction. Children were taught to be seen and not heard and to submit to the wishes of their elders. The attitude of parents toward their children, however, seems to have been a tolerant one, judged in terms of English standards where control was much more harsh.

Marriages occurred early and were often arranged by the parents. It is true that daughters might refuse to accept the choice of their parents, but there is little indication that they were inclined to do so. They were brought up to believe in

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Goodsell, *Problems of the Family*, pp. 73-76.

the advice of the elders, "Let not your fancy overrule your necessity"; "Where passion and affection sway, that man is deprived of sense and understanding." Mercenary marriages were not uncommon among all classes of people.<sup>1</sup>

An integral part of the Puritan acceptance of early marriage arose out of the attitude toward sex. The Puritan conception of marital relations was a negative one. The Puritans had felt the influence of Calvin, who looked upon marriage as a last resort when self-control fails. Continency was the ideal state, according to Calvin, though he realized that for most men marriage was the only practical solution tolerable, and the Puritans seem to have accepted the latter part of the doctrine whole-heartedly. It was also to the home that the Puritan looked for protection from other social relations likely to be morally dangerous. Calhoun's characterization of the Puritan Englishman was no less true of the Puritan in America: "The Puritan Englishman was unsociable, independent, full of biblical traditions with cultivated reverence for paternal authority and a desire for abundant paternity."<sup>2</sup>

The village life of the Puritans was conducive to the close control of the community. Even courtship could not begin without parental consent. Betrothal, therefore, was celebrated by a public ceremony, whereupon public surveillance was at an end and the couple was permitted every liberty in their contacts with each other. The result was that they not infrequently lived together prior to the marriage ceremony. Before marriage publication of the banns was required. The marriage ceremony, however, tended to be a civil affair, unregulated by the church.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Calhoun, *op. cit.*, I, 41.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 40.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Goodsell, *The Family as a Social and Educational Institution*, pp. 352-77.

## THE RENAISSANCE AND INDIVIDUALISM

The second great source of ideas affecting the family in America grows out of the Renaissance and the Reformation. The Reformation introduced into marriage two new ideas: romanticism and individualism. Life in a new continent favored the development to the highest degree of these ideas in relations between the sexes, as well as in other realms of life. While Puritanism was strengthening the family, the Reformation tended to unsettle it. The result was to bring into conflict two conceptions of family life, both of which are still deeply rooted in the mores. One emphasizes the indissolubility of marriage with its sexual restraint, while the other emphasizes the sacredness of individual rights and opportunity.

This conflict between the Puritan conception of the family and the individualism of the Reformation and the Renaissance has resulted in an inconsistency in attitudes toward family relations. Romanticism may be interpreted as an attempt to bring consistency into this conflict. A single indissoluble marriage is the ideal, the consummation of which is dependent upon love having its origin in the sex interests of the individuals.

In this romantic conception of family relations lies, in fact, the heart of the conflict between those who would prohibit divorce and those who would make divorce easier—a conflict which is characteristic of the American conception of marriage. Fundamentally both groups hold to the same conception of the family. The difference in reaction is a difference in emphasis. One group believes in the sacrifice, if necessary, of the individual wishes for the indissolubility of the family and the other holds that individual desires are paramount. The attitudes of the first group hark back to

Puritanism, while those of the latter are a product of the Renaissance. It is in the Renaissance that one finds the genesis of individualism, which, without doubt, has been both the greatest disorganizing and the greatest organizing force in American family life.

While both romanticism and individualism have their roots in the Renaissance, in their development, as far as the family is concerned, they were not always so integrally associated as they are in present-day conceptions of the family. Romanticism grew out of the age of chivalry, but it did not find its way to the masses until long after the last tournaments had been fought. And when it did make its inroads into the popular conception of family life, it came as a variation upon the theme of individualism which had preceded it.

Individualism found its impetus in the Industrial Revolution and the expansion of the frontier. While settlement in the colonies meant more individual choice of action, the customs transplanted from Europe still tended to favor communal control, and village life to furnish the necessary locale. Family connections continued to be important, and it was in these terms, to a large extent, that the individual had status. The home also continued to be an economic unit. The Industrial Revolution led to the breakdown of the economic unity of the home, and the expanding frontier placed a premium upon individual initiative. It is in this setting of puritanical background and individualistic outlook that romanticism has developed into a code of marriage relations.

#### THE ROMANTIC COMPLEX

Puritanism and romanticism, while in some respects contradictory, have combined in the American heritage to elim-



inate from the traditional conception of marriage and family life the fundamental necessity of sexual accommodation. In psychoanalytic terminology, both represent attempts to escape from reality.

Puritanism does not deny the necessity of sexual relations so long as they are within the marriage bond and for the purpose of bringing children into the world. To the Puritan, large families are a means to the enlargement of the world of God, but any allusions to sex, or to anything connected with sex, is considered indecent. The Puritan looks upon sex as unclean and upon sexual relations as a surrender to the lower impulses of man. That sex responses could symbolize the fusing of personalities in marriage relations is incomprehensible to the Puritan.

Romanticism in America is, in some respects at least, a reaction against the puritanical attitude. Instead of looking upon sex as unclean and indecent, the romanticist idealizes the relation between the sexes and by idealization of the sex impulse escapes from reality as effectively as does the Puritan. Under the influence of this latter interpretation of marriage there is not so much a taboo upon all attention to sex, but upon any recognition of the sex relationship except in highly idealized terms.

Another aspect of the romantic attitude toward marriage is the demand for freedom in selecting mates. This ideal is a natural development out of the highly individualized conception of life which is current in America. If one's interests are his own, and his alone, then necessarily he must be allowed to choose his mate unhampered by the authority of any group—his family, the community, or his friends. In so far as individualism leads to democracy it follows that selection of mates must be upon some other basis than that which

characterized marriage upon the Continent, where the status of the family was taken into consideration. In theory all are alike, so that in choosing a mate one is expected to choose where he will without regard to any factor except what is called love. But, of course, it also follows from such a conception of family life that if one fails to realize his expectations he may demand the privilege of searching farther in order to do so. Divorce, therefore, is the logical counterpart of romanticism, furnishing the only way in which the romantic ideal can be realized if marriage proves the selection to have been an erroneous one.

Freedom of choice in accordance with the romantic attitude was facilitated by the conditions of pioneer life which developed individualism. Where each married pair established a home away from the larger family group, the importance of meeting the requirements of others disappeared. Besides, in a growing country, family lines were of little importance and one's prestige depended upon other factors than the family name and reputation. Any choice in marriage was therefore as good as another, so long as it was satisfactory to the persons themselves. It was under such conditions that individual selection became an established principle in the American code. And though in certain sections of the country where life was less mobile consideration might be given to the wishes of the larger family group, even here many individuals refused to recognize anything but the romantic pattern.

The early conditions of life in America also contributed to the successful operation of this system of selection and therefore had much to do with its preservation. With the general leveling of cultural backgrounds, due to the absence of class lines and the constant shifting in vocational activi-

ties on the part of a large proportion of the population, interests and customs were sufficiently common to insure a fair degree of success to any marriage selection. Contacts were generally restricted to persons living within the same community who knew each other quite well so that there was little likelihood of any great disparity of interests between husband and wife. And should conflict develop later, personal pride tended to prevent overt breaks.

The growing idea of democracy had other effects upon the family than fostering the growth of the romantic idea. It also slowly brought about democratic relations within the family itself. Whereas the early colonial family was patriarchal, relations became more democratic as the frontier advanced westward. In the South, the chivalric attitude toward women survived for many years, but for the rest of the country the wife and mother began to play a more equal rôle with her husband in the activities of the home, in which there was often much mutual co-operation. Children, too, came in for more democratic treatment—in the older sections as the result of more comfortable circumstances of their parents; in the newer sections because of the need for co-operative activities and the abundance of opportunity for the individual to “strike out on his own.”

But while these changes in the family were quite revolutionary in many respects, the family was still an important unit in the life of the community. It had become democratic in organization with its appreciation of the value of its individual members. And while it had lost most of its religious and educational functions, it still provided a common cultural experience for its members. Family name was not so important, and yet family pride continued to play a rôle in the lives of most persons. Persons related by blood

were still given considerations not accorded outsiders, and community opinion approved. The birth of male offspring continued to present occasions for congratulations. Romantic love played the predominant rôle in determining the selection of marriage mates, but common responsibilities, security, and family pride became more and more prominent in keeping husband and wife together as the wedding anniversaries passed.

The next great change in the American family is the result of changes going on in urban life. It is in urban centers that individualism is developing into full bloom. It is also in the city that romanticism makes its ultimate transformation of marriage and family relations. Thus, in the city, these two related ideas carried down from the Renaissance find their complete expression and mold the family pattern into forms which are often a shock to the passing generation.

#### THE URBAN FAMILY

One of the great changes affecting the family in the city is the decline of the control of the community and neighborhood. In the rural community everybody knew everybody else. There was little which one did that was not the subject of comment and speculation on the part of other members in the community. To take too lightly the conventions and customs of the group was to be ostracized and to lose caste. Husband and wife might quarrel, but to break off marriage relations one had to take into account the arbitrary censure of the gossip.

In the city the situation is quite different. Relations tend to become casual and specialized. Association is upon the basis, primarily, of specialized interests where but one phase of one's personality is known. The individual is no longer

a part of one group, but belongs to many. None of these knows him intimately and so does not attempt to control his behavior in marriage relations, or if it does, he can drop contacts with that group. Many a problem is solved in the city by the simple expedient of moving into another neighborhood.

The individual thus tends to be freed in the city of all the informal neighborhood controls which are so effective in the country. Law and the courts still operate to prevent severance of the marriage bond without due regard to the formally expressed wishes of the community. But these restrictions are primarily in terms of the protection of property rights of the wife and children and act as negative controls over the formal aspects of family relations, leaving wholly uncontrolled the whole network of informal relations so effectively held in check in the country by the surreptitious vigilance of the gossip.

This freedom of the individual is reflected in the behavior of the person under the changed conditions of mating in the city. In the hypothetical rural community, choice of a mate was limited to a very small group. Not only did courtship take place within a restricted geographical area, but competition was controlled. Once a youth escorted a girl home from church services or a box-social three or four times in succession he became known in the community as her "steady." Thereafter, other eligible young men did not seek her company. Acquaintance between the two young people, however, antedated this event. Both persons were known to the families of the two young people. Often they had grown up in the same community, but if not, their communal backgrounds had so much in common that their interests could be little different.

In the city, on the other hand, courtship tends to begin in a far different setting. Young people meet on the dance floor, in schools, in offices, and even on the streets. "Pick-ups" and "blind dates" are not uncommon occurrences in the city. Girls go to dance halls in groups, finding partners after they get there, many of whom they have never met before. Ordinarily, little is known about each other when courtship begins in the city. The result is that two persons may find each other quite congenial in the limited contacts before marriage, to discover afterward that they have little in common.

In the country the large family group has always played a rôle in determining the selection of mates. In the city, on the other hand, the family group is not consulted, and if it should venture to offer suggestions the individual reacts against them. Choice tends, therefore, to be determined strictly in conformity with the romantic philosophy of love. This philosophy is characterized by the belief that affinities are ideal love relations, that each one may find an ideal mate, that there is only one, and that this one will be immediately recognized when met, i.e., through love at first sight.

Another change in family relations is indicated by the rôle which children play in the city family. In the rural environment the child is the center of interest. Parents are sometimes chided for thinking that their children are so superior to other people's children. And yet the rural community frowns upon the parent who fails to take sides with his child regardless of the circumstances. Personal interests of the parents tend to be relegated to the background, and they often actually live for their children. The desire to perpetuate the family name is a rural sentiment.

All this tends to be changed in the city. There a child is often a handicap. Many parents do not want their children, and look upon them either as nuisances, or as playthings, to be turned over to nursemaids most of the time. Parental attitude tends to become no longer one of constant solicitude for the welfare of the child, but instead a smug complacency and an unemotional interest.

Interest and attention are directed more toward one's self. It is true, of course, that unselfishness, so much praised by moralists, has never been a common trait. In the city, however, people are individual-selfish rather than family-selfish as they are in the country. There is more attention to dress and "front" and to the satisfaction of personal wishes in the city. It is doubtful, therefore, if children play any important rôle in keeping husband and wife together as they often do in the country. They may even create friction in many instances.

In the city also the romantic ideal becomes the sole criterion of success in marriage. Romance, however, demands constant demonstration of affection—love, caresses, constant wooing. If this is not realized in marriage, one tends to turn elsewhere either directly or vicariously. Considerations which held the family together in the rural community—status in the neighborhood, economic security, the care of children—seem of little importance when romance is the ideal.

The result of this emphasis upon romance is to elevate emotional accommodations and responses to a rôle which they have never before held in marriage relations. Emphasis tends thus to be placed upon companionship and mutual interests of the two persons concerned, with little or no rec-

ognition of obligations to the larger family group or to the community.

But while the romantic ideal has been generally accepted in the city, its realization is beset with many difficulties. Perhaps the most disconcerting of these difficulties is the fact that there are no generally accepted family patterns which seem adapted to the realization of this ideal. The forms of the past do not suffice because they were worked out in terms of a radically different set of criteria. The result is that many of the attempts to revamp the family along lines adaptable to urban life are bizarre and unconventional.

Some experimentation in family forms under urban conditions is undoubtedly needed. But the presentation of these experiments through the press, the motion picture, and on the stage, without any criteria for determining the relative merits of each attempt, not only makes them worthless as a guide to others, but actually fosters an interest in novel and bizarre practices.

This lack of consensus in practices of family life is largely due, therefore, to the fact that as yet there has been no satisfactory adjustment of the family to urban life. There have been many experiments, but all have been haphazard in their approach. No satisfactory technique of experimentation in family relations has been developed. Neither is there any adequate method of studying such experiments as are attempted. Why some marriages are successful and others not is still an unsolved problem and a matter of opinion.

What is needed is more research into family relations. Successful marriages as well as unsuccessful ones should be carefully analyzed to determine what family forms are actually feasible under modern urban conditions. This, how-



ever, will require a higher objectivity of approach than has characterized much of the reflection on the family in the past. It will require the same critical open-mindedness with which the chemist observes the behavior of gases in a laboratory.

But how can this objective attitude toward the family be acquired? The family has always been considered the most sacred of social institutions. One tends to idealize the family or to rebel against it with unreasoning emotional condemnation. There are many difficulties in the way of looking at the family without the distorted coloring of emotional attachment or rebellion arising out of the experiences of the individual and of the race.

More and more, however, scientists are attempting to take a more objective attitude toward the family and to emphasize the need for more thorough understanding before formulating programs for control of family relations. It is, therefore, a knowledge of this movement which is a prerequisite to the acquisition of facts pertinent to the resolution of present-day conflict in family forms and practices.

#### SUGGESTED READINGS

- Chapin. *Cultural Change*, chap. x.  
Ellis. *The Task of Social Hygiene*.  
Fiske. *The Changing Family*, chaps. iii, vi-viii.  
Goodsell. *The Family as a Social and Educational Institution*, chap. i.  
Groves. *Social Problems of the Family*, chap. i.  
Lofthouse. *Ethics and the Family*.  
Meisel-Hess. *The Sexual Crisis*.  
Mowrer. *Family Disorganization*, chap. i.  
Popenoe. *Conservation of the Family*, chaps. ii-xi.  
Reuter and Runner. *The Family*, chaps. i, ii, and xvii.  
Sanger. *Motherhood in Bondage*.

## CHAPTER II

### THE STUDY OF THE FAMILY

One of the most notable achievements of the last hundred years has been the attainment of an objective approach to the institutions of social life. This movement, which Small liked to call the "drive toward objectivity," is not confined to the last hundred years, but it is during that period that the most notable gains have been made. In fact, it is often considered legitimate to date the beginning of the science of sociology with the writings of Comte and Spencer.<sup>1</sup>

Though the attainment of objectivity in the study of the family has been a part of the larger movement, it has had to cope with a greater emotional resistance than has the study of certain other social institutions, such as those of the market place and of formal control. The result has been that only certain of the more formal aspects of family life have been studied, such as marriage ceremonies, the forms of marriage, regulations governing inheritance, and the like. And while a few have come to the point where they can approach the whole network of human relations in family life without the emotional colorings of the past, that attitude is a very recent acquisition and is not shared by any large portion of the population. That such an outlook was inevitable, however, is apparent as one surveys the change in thought on the family.

<sup>1</sup> Comte's *Cours de philosophie positive* was published between 1830 and 1842. Spencer's *Social Statics* appeared in 1850, *Descriptive Sociology* was begun in 1867, and the first volume of *Principles of Sociology* was published in 1876.

As in other realms of social life, the earliest attempts at control of family relations arose out of folk ways. In crisis situations reflection added to current practices the sanction of the group. Judging from the literature on so-called primitive peoples, these seem to have been concerned with communal control over marriage and divorce, and the determination of the respective rôles of members of the family with reference to inheritance, control of property, education, and ceremonial duties.

Secular control of the family continued, apparently, from these early beginnings, until the beginning of the Christian Era when the church slowly assumed the functions of regulating certain aspects of family life. At first the church accepted and sanctioned the existing forms of marriage and busied itself with enforcing rules governing marriage disabilities, restriction of divorce, and second marriage, etc.<sup>1</sup> In other words, the church's earliest control consisted in strengthening the customs of the time. And while marriage under church auspices was encouraged, it was not until the twelfth century that marriage was made a sacrament, and not until the sixteenth century that the ceremony was required to be held in the church.

Thus the church gave sanction to family life in such a way as would seem to make relations between husband and wife of the highest order. Yet it was this same church during the same period which developed what was later to become the puritanical attitude toward sex. Virginity and continency, the Church Fathers preached, were the highest of virtues, but since out of reach of most people, marriage and family life were preferable to sexual irregularity. The church found itself in the paradoxical position of removing marriage

<sup>1</sup> See Howard, *History of Matrimonial Institutions*, I, 291.

from the mundane plane through ceremonials and at the same time building up an attitude of distaste and suspicion toward the sex relations which marriage initiated.<sup>1</sup>

It was by this process that the church fostered an attitude toward family relations that would prevent recognition of the basic needs which the family sought to satisfy. It is out of this attitude that has grown the modern attitude of antipathy toward discussion of family relations except in idealized terms. The pains of childbirth and the burdens of child-rearing are penance for the sins of sex. Thus the whole of family life was taken out of the secular field by distributing it between two realms, the sacred and the obscene. That which was declared sacred could only be discussed in idealistic terms, whereas the obscene could not be discussed at all.

It is customary to look to the Reformation as the source for the secularization of thought on the family. The leaders of the Protestant revolt, however, were not always consistent in their attitudes. Martin Luther, for example, seems to have wavered in attitude toward the secularization of the marriage ceremony, sometimes looking upon the ceremony as a divine symbol, now as the introduction to a physiological affair and now as a retaliative measure against the Catholic church.<sup>2</sup> The attitude of the Puritans in New England was a little more clearly defined, since they attempted to discourage church ceremonies at first, looking upon marriage as a wholly mundane affair. This attitude, however, was soon modified to permit ministers officiating at weddings as public officials.<sup>3</sup>

The church thus continued to play a prominent rôle in the

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 324-40.

<sup>2</sup> See Todd, *The Secularization of Marriage*, p. 32.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36.

regulation of family life in spite of minor skirmishes on the frontier of the marriage ceremony. The Catholic church has, of course, continued to look upon marriage as a sacrament, whereas the Protestant churches, on the whole, have held to the secular conception of marriage, at the same time encouraging the performance of marriage ceremonies under churchly auspices. Further attempts have been made to control family life by promulgating theories of marital relations, by encouraging marriage within the fold, by fixing the grounds for divorce, by prescribing the conditions under which divorced persons might remarry, and by disciplining persons guilty of irregular sex relations.<sup>1</sup>

The growing trend toward secularization of thought on the family, accordingly, while having its beginnings in the church, has been promoted chiefly from other sources. As Calhoun has pointed out, the reformed church, on the whole, has recovered the ecclesiastical view of matrimony as a divine ordinance, governed by spiritual laws and ideals. The aim of the family, according to the Catholic view, continues to be the procreation of children, who, properly instructed, may become the adopted children of God. The family is holy, therefore, and its end is the salvation of parents and children. Through the sacrament of matrimony all the relations between husband and wife, and parents and children, are supernaturalized and sanctified.<sup>2</sup>

The theory of the family held to by the Protestant churches is, on the whole, not unlike that of the Catholic church, though less emphasis is placed upon the sacredness of the marriage ceremony. Assertions of marriage as a holy estate are not uncommon in the pronouncements of Protes-

<sup>1</sup> Calhoun, *Social History of the American Family*, III, 283.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 284-85.

tant churches. Many of the Protestant group concur in the view that the family is a spiritual institution, ordained by God and governed by spiritual laws.<sup>1</sup> It is, therefore, to other sources than the church that one has to look for forces carrying on the campaign of secularization.

#### ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE FAMILY

One of the earliest and most prominent forces in secularizing thought on the family has been anthropology. The anthropological study of the family began early in the second half of the nineteenth century, reaching its peak, so far as the secularization of thought on the family is concerned, about the beginning of the twentieth century.<sup>2</sup> By that time thinking with reference to the primitive family had become highly objective and its influence was beginning to be felt in sociological discussions. It was during this period that it became customary to begin all formal discussions of the family with a description of the primitive family.

The interests of these earlier anthropologists were, of course, restricted. They were attracted particularly by the ceremonies connected with family life such as those surrounding betrothal, marriage, divorce, childbirth, etc., and the customs governing the division of labor, inheritance, and the control of property. These observations, however,

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 286-87.

<sup>2</sup> A pioneer in the consideration of anthropological data in the family is Unger, *Die Ehe in ihrer welthistorischen Entwicklung* (published in 1850). More epoch-making treatises, however, are MacLennan, *Primitive Marriage* (1865); Lippert, *Die Geschichte der Familie* (1884); Letourneau, *L'Evolution du mariage et de la famille* (1888); Starcke, *The Primitive Family* (1889); Westermarck, *The History of Human Marriage* (1891). More restricted discussions appeared during the same period, in such books as Bachhofen, *Das Mutterrecht* (1861); Main, *Ancient Law* (1878); Morgan, *Ancient Society* (1878); Tylor, *Researches in Early History of Mankind* (1878); Spencer, *The Principles of Sociology* (1879).

served to throw into sharper relief the corresponding practices and customs of contemporary peoples. This restriction of observation was, of course, partly due to the limited reflection of the times about family relations and partly to the inability of outsiders to see all of primitive life.

The study of the family of primitive peoples had, however, two revolutionary effects upon the reflective thought with reference to the modern family: (1) it developed an unemotional attitude toward family customs and practices which could be turned back upon the modern family with penetrating results, and (2) it led to speculation about the origin of the family and its evolution and therefore to the conception of the family and its relations as a human affair rather than a divine arrangement. All this tended, therefore, to lift the study of the family out of the emotional field and to build up an objective outlook, thus paving the way for a more thoroughgoing analysis than had previously been possible.

Application of this new outlook was, as might be expected, first made by sociologists to the problems of the family rather than to research into its organization. Foremost in the discussion of problems have been the following: the control of marriage, divorce, sex education, illegitimacy, delinquency, prostitution, dependency, child welfare, birth control, and various aspects of the woman's movement. The result has been to take the family completely out of the religious field, completing the secularization process which had its beginning in the Reformation.

The approach of the sociologist to the problems of the family, however, has not always been free from emotionalism. The reform attitude itself has in it a large emotional content, though secular. And while many of the reform pro-

posals and programs were formulated upon the assumption of idealistic premises having little or no basis in fact, the enlarged reflection upon the family which grew out of such proposals made way for the initiation of research. It is at this point that students of the family find themselves at the present time.<sup>1</sup>

#### THE STUDY OF THE FAMILY<sup>2</sup>

Studies of the family may be divided into two groups: (1) studies in the organization of the family and (2) studies in the disorganization of the family. In the past these two types of studies have tended to represent quite different fundamental approaches. Studies in organization have been concerned chiefly with analysis of the family into its constituent parts and the tracing of the changes in these patterns through time. Studies in disorganization, on the other hand, have been approached chiefly from the reform standpoint, with emphasis upon programs for rehabilitation. As such studies have tended to take more and more into consideration the essential nature of the conflict elements and the forces making for disorganization, they have approached more closely to the point of view represented in studies of organization.

Studies in the organization of the family, however, present a wide range of variations. Professor Burgess has suggested the following classification: (1) the primitive family, (2) familial attitudes and sentiments, (3) economics of the family, and (4) sociology of the family.<sup>3</sup> From this stand-

<sup>1</sup> Professor Burgess' Foreword to Mowrer, *Family Disorganization*, pp. vii-xi.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Park and Burgess, *Introduction to the Science of Sociology*, pp. 213-16.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 220-23. In another place Burgess has suggested another classification: (1) the family among preliterate peoples, (2) the psychological



point all the studies of the family among peoples having no written history would be classed under the first head, including both those attempting to trace the natural history of marriage and those describing family life in different cultural areas. In the second group would come those studies in which chief emphasis is placed upon the attitudes and sentiments governing the relations between the sexes. "Economics and the family" includes those studies concerned chiefly with analysis of the economic functions of the family and the relations of these functions to other aspects of social life, whereas the "sociology of the family" would include the more systematic treatises of family organization.

An optional classification of studies in family organization may be made in terms of the three fundamental aspects as follows: (1) the family as a natural organization for response, (2) the family as a cultural group, and (3) the family as a social and legal institution.

As a natural organization for response, the family has been thought to be based upon biology. Studies from this point of view have emphasized the sex instinct or impulse, the physical dependence of offspring upon parents during the early years, and the development of sentiments and familial attitudes. In some instances family life among the lower animals has been included for comparative purposes. For the most part, the common goal has been to get at the origin and basis of family life.<sup>1</sup>

Studies of the family as a cultural group approach the

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study of the family, (3) family economics, (4) family organization, and (5) social disorganization and reorganization.—"Topical Summaries of Current Literature: The Family," *Amer. Jour. Soc.*, XXXII (July, 1926), 104-11.

<sup>1</sup> Representative studies in this group are Ellis, *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*; Flügel, *The Psycho-Analytic Study of the Family*; Popenoe, *Modern Marriage*; and parts of Westermarck, *op. cit.*

family in terms of the culture which it develops: the organization of activities, its control mechanisms, its ceremonies and ritual, its tradition, and its romances. Studies of the economic functions of the family would be included in this group as well as those of family forms and patterns.<sup>1</sup>

The family as a legal and social institution has been the object of study of those whose interest was primarily in the rules, ceremonies, and customs set up by the group for the control of family relations. These studies have been made of both historical and preliterate peoples and have constituted the large bulk of writings on the family.<sup>2</sup>

#### FAMILY DISORGANIZATION

Studies in family disorganization may be grouped as follows: (1) studies of social policy with reference to various aspects of family disorganization, (2) studies of administration and control, and (3) studies of human nature.

Most, if not all, the reform literature on the family would belong to the first group. In much of this literature the analysis inevitably led to proposals of legislative changes of one kind and another, whether with reference to the control of divorce, illegitimacy, prostitution, delinquency, or what not. Other writings looking toward more revolutionary changes, also, are essentially of the same order. In all the emphasis is upon the social policy of the group either as a thing to be reinforced or to be changed.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Of particular importance in this group are Thomas and Znaniecki, *The Polish Peasant*, and Kulp, *Country Life in South China: The Sociology of Familism*.

<sup>2</sup> Many of the best-known books on the family belong to this group, such as Howard, *op. cit.*, Goodsell, *The Family as a Social and Educational Institution*; Bosanquet, *The Family*, Part I; and the bulk of Westermarck, *op. cit.*

<sup>3</sup> Such studies, e.g., as Groves, *The Marriage Crisis*; Key, *Love and Marriage*; Meisel-Hess, *The Sexual Crisis*.

Studies in administration and control have been developed chiefly by social workers. Their concern has not been so much an analysis of social policy, but instead one of determining how that policy could best be made effective through administrative and control mechanisms.<sup>1</sup>

Studies of the first two types add little to the understanding of the essential nature of the family, though they are highly important from the standpoint of social control. Studies of human nature in the disorganization of the family, however, contribute to the analysis of the organization of the family by portraying a complementary phase. In these studies emphasis is upon the attitudes of the various members of the family toward each other and the ways in which these attitudes find expression in the behavior of each.<sup>2</sup>

Taken all together, these studies of organization and disorganization show a common trend in development toward a fundamental conception of the family as the basis for further research. With the abandonment of the earlier explanation of family behavior in terms of instincts, the tendency is toward the study of the family in terms of the attitudes, sentiments, values, and rôles of the members.<sup>3</sup> In this trend studies of organization and disorganization converge upon common ground.

#### RELATION OF DISORGANIZATION TO ORGANIZATION

This trend toward the study of the human-nature aspects of the family has necessitated the redefinition of the terms "organization" and "disorganization." The point of view in

<sup>1</sup> Representative studies are Colcord, *Broken Homes*; Eubank, *A Study of Family Desertion*; Kammerer, *The Unmarried Mother*.

<sup>2</sup> This group is represented by such books as Mowrer, *Family Disorganization and Domestic Discord*; Thomas and Znaniecki, *op. cit.*

<sup>3</sup> Burgess, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

the more recent literature is dynamic instead of static. The organization of the family is conceived of as a process of interaction which begins before marriage for the husband and wife and with birth for the child, and continues throughout life, or until the family becomes disintegrated.

The process of organization consists of building up attitudes of identification and mutual response. Whether between husband and wife or between parents and children, these attitudes take the form of feelings of oneness, of common aspirations, common wishes, and objectives. This identification of interests defines the relations between the various members of the family and gives to them a unity implied in the term "organization." This unity, however, is never an accomplished thing, but is an ever changing relationship. It is always in the process of becoming. It represents, to a large extent, an accommodation to the various conflict elements inherent in family life. And because so much of the process takes the form of accommodation, it is so reciprocally related to the process of disorganization.

The process of disorganization of the family is the result of the fact that members are always in contact with others outside the family group. Each individual leads a life which is not wholly identified with that of the family. He participates in other groups besides the family. His personality is therefore a multi-sided unit, some sides of which are controlled and determined by his relations with other groups than the family. The result is that there is within the individual considerable conflict between the ties of allegiance to other groups and to the family. These find expression in tendencies to build up attitudes of detachment and of individualization. This, then, is the process of disorganization in family relations.

The process of family disorganization, however, like its reciprocal process, family organization, tends to be continuous. In fact, in every family group both tend to go on together, analogous to the physiological process of metabolism. As has been said in another place:

The physiologist explains the continual change in the substances of which the body is made up as the process of metabolism. He differentiates within this process two antagonistic types of processes: anabolism—those processes by which the body is built up, chiefly digestion and assimilation; catabolism—those processes by which worn-out materials are discarded, such as expiration and excretion. Healthy life consists in maintaining an equilibrium between the effects of these two processes. But both operate at the same time and to the same degree so long as the organism remains healthy.<sup>1</sup>

Family relations may be thought of in the same way. Here the two processes are organization and disorganization. The organization of the family is made up of the ties between the members. The process of organization consists in the building up of these relations; the process of disorganization consists in their breaking down. Just as in the case of the living organism, the anabolic and catabolic processes operate simultaneously, though not necessarily to the same degree—depending upon the state of health—so in family relations organization and disorganization are reciprocal, one being a function of the other.<sup>2</sup>

Thus in the process approach to the study of the family, the common-sense distinction between studies of family organization and family disorganization tend to disappear. This common approach emphasizes the relations between individuals in all their phases, whether these relations be matters of community prescriptions, i.e., laws, mores, and

<sup>1</sup> Mowrer, *Family Disorganization*, pp. 140-41.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 127-44.

customs; of individual attitudes and sentiments; or of characteristic forms and practices which distinguish one family from another.

But while the trend is toward recognizing the essential likenesses between organizing and disorganizing factors and processes in family relations, it is still necessary in the interest of clarity of analysis and presentation to maintain the distinction. Nevertheless, it should be kept in mind that in doing so one is simply adopting an empirical device which has no counterpart in the experiences of the individual in family relations.

#### SUGGESTED READINGS

Flügel. *The Psycho-Analytic Study of the Family*, chap. i.

Goodsell. *The Family as a Social and Educational Institution*, chap. i.

Mowrer. *Family Disorganization*, chap. xiii; Foreword by E. W. Burgess, pp. vii-xi.

Reuter and Runner. *The Family*, chap. iii.

Todd. *The Secularization of Domestic Relations*.



**PART II**  
**THE ORGANIZATION OF THE FAMILY**





## CHAPTER III

### HUMAN NATURE AND THE FAMILY

Human nature is at once both a rogue and a saint; the source of all our homely virtues, the scapegoat for all of human frailties. Thus praised by the poets and vilified by the moralists, human nature becomes the prodigal son to the humanist. But to the student of the family it symbolizes a phase of society and of the individual which is of primary importance to the understanding of family relations.<sup>1</sup>

That "man is not born human" is a truism.<sup>2</sup> He is born an animal—though with potentialities of becoming human—into a society which has a culture. He finds himself at birth surrounded by other individuals whose relations between each other are governed by practices and beliefs which have accumulated throughout the ages. The relations of the new arrival, the care he receives, and the way in which he is treated by those about him are all defined by the culture of the group into which he happens to be born. He becomes human in these associations by having his original impulses defined for him by the culture of his group.

And since the family is the first group in which the individual finds himself, it is not surprising that the core of human nature should develop in the family circle. Nor is it any more surprising that, having had his nature so indelibly molded in the family, the individual should find that type

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Park and Burgess, *Introduction to the Science of Sociology*, pp. 64-72; also Cooley, *Human Nature and the Social Order*.

<sup>2</sup> Park, *Principles of Human Behavior*, pp. 9-16; cited in Park and Burgess, *op. cit.*, pp. 76-81.

of relations an almost indispensable phase of his entire life. Thus the family performs the dual function of providing a milieu in which human nature may be developed and in which many of the impulses of human nature may be realized.

#### THE FAMILY AS A PRIMARY GROUP

The origin of the family is unknown. And yet there is every reason for believing that the family is very old since in every record of early man there is evidence of family life. There has, of course, been considerable attention given to determining the origin of the family, but these writings are wholly speculative. The best known of these writings is that of Westermarck whose reasoning takes the form of a syllogism. Family life is found among certain of the higher species of birds and mammals; it is also found among primitive peoples whose position in the evolutionary scale lies between prehistoric man and modern man; therefore, family life was to be found among prehistoric man and originated among the higher animals.<sup>1</sup>

Westermarck's theory that the family preceded the human race itself is, accordingly, based upon deductive reasoning. The validity of this reasoning process hinges upon a widely accepted version of the evolutionary theory. In brief, the evolutionary sequence, according to this view, runs somewhat as follows: higher mammals, anthropoids, prehistoric man, primitive man, modern man.<sup>2</sup> This sequence is no stronger than its weakest link—primitive man. While the older anthropologists were almost of one accord in accepting savage societies and aboriginal life as represent-

<sup>1</sup> Westermarck, *The History of Human Marriage* (5th ed.), I, 26-77.

<sup>2</sup> The argument that each of these groups represents an offshoot from a common stock in no wise changes the tenor of the reasoning.

ing a preceding stage in the evolution of historical man, that view is widely challenged at the present time. So-called primitive peoples are, after all, contemporary to modern man. Their social adaptations may represent either retarded stages through which modern man has passed or they may represent unique variations. There is no inductive way, accordingly, of tracing the family beyond the period of written history, though undoubtedly the institution is much older.

Another phase of the origin of the family is the explanation offered for the appearance of the family. Again the argument is highly speculative. Westermarck in speaking of marriage, which he defines in a general way to mean what is here called the family, says that it originated in primeval habit.<sup>1</sup>

. . . . It was, I believe, even in primitive times, the habit for a man and a woman (or several women) to live together, to have sexual relations with one another, and to rear their offspring in common, the man being the protector and supporter of his family and the woman being his helpmate and the nurse of their children. This habit was sanctioned by custom, and afterwards by law, and was thus transformed into a social institution. In order to trace marriage in its legal sense to its ultimate source, we must therefore try to find out the origin of the habit from which it sprang.<sup>2</sup>

He then proceeds to present data to show family life among certain species of birds and mammals, including the anthropoids, and concludes that the explanation of this behavior lies in the marital and paternal instincts, the presence of which he explains in terms of natural selection. Accordingly, since family life is continuous throughout the evolutionary series from the higher animals to and including modern man, its source is in the instincts which develop

<sup>1</sup> Westermarck, *op. cit.*, I, 27.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 27-28.

into habits in primitive man and into institutions in modern man.<sup>1</sup>

This view, however, cannot be accepted without caution, since it is built upon the theory of instincts which is being rigorously attacked. The criticism of the instinct theory, in brief, is that it oversimplifies human behavior by tracing all response to a few simple behavior mechanisms. These mechanisms cannot be observed, either because they are modified shortly after birth or because they do not appear at birth. They therefore take the form of hypotheses, carried over from the observation of animals.<sup>2</sup>

More recent writers, accordingly, are not so sure about these fundamental instincts which are supposed to mold the family. They argue that the family satisfies an immediate need—companionship. Children may be born, and may be wanted, but the time of their birth tends to be a matter of accident rather than of intention. Race perpetuation may thus be said to be an accidental consequence of marriage—acquiesced in because of social sanctions rather than because of satisfying instincts.

The widespread prevalence of the family may be explained, then, in terms of certain functions which the family performs. Whether these functions are based upon instincts or not is of little importance so long as it is conceded that they are universal. The theory underlying this method of approach seems to be substantially as follows: If by a proc-

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 35-72. Other writers have concurred in this general view. See, e.g., Reed, *The Modern Family*, pp. 3-14; Goodsell, *Problems of the Family*, pp. 3-4.

<sup>2</sup> See, e.g., Bernard, *Instinct: A Study in Social Psychology*; Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, pp. 131-68; Watson, *Behaviorism*, pp. 74-107; Faris, "Are Instincts Data or Hypotheses?" *Amer. Jour. Soc.*, XXVII (September, 1921), 184-98.

ess of comparison of the family among all sorts of peoples one can determine what are the common purposes which this institution serves, then one can conclude that the family arose as a response to the universal need for the exercise of those functions. This would constitute, so to speak, a functional explanation of the family.

#### FUNCTIONS OF THE FAMILY

Ogburn, in pointing out certain modifications in urban life, says that in the agricultural era the family performed six functions: (1) affectional, (2) economic, (3) recreational, (4) protective, (5) religious, and (6) educational.<sup>1</sup> Reed finds that the family performs four functions: (1) race perpetuation, (2) socialization, (3) regulation and satisfaction of sexual needs, and (4) economic functions.<sup>2</sup> According to Groves, the family performs the functions of (1) protection and care of the young, (2) regulation and control of the sex impulse, (3) conservation and transmission of the social heritage, and (4) provision of opportunity for the most intimate contacts.<sup>3</sup>

The family undoubtedly in the past performed an important function as the most primary of primary groups. It was in the family that the attitudes of loyalty, sympathy, altruism, co-operation, and good will were developed and fostered. It was also in the family that obedience to authority was taught. Furthermore, the family has served as a mechanism for transmitting the culture of one generation to another. And while this function has been largely dele-

<sup>1</sup> "Social Heritage and the Family," *Family Life Today* (ed. Margaret E. Rich), p. 31.

<sup>2</sup> *The Modern Family*, pp. 29-39.

<sup>3</sup> *An Introduction to Sociology*, pp. 206-7; cf. *Social Problems of the Family*, pp. 1-5 and 55-65.

gated to other groups, the church, the school, the workshop, and the like, the family still molds the child much more than appears upon casual inspection.

In the modern family, of course, many of the socializing functions are disappearing and being replaced by individualizing processes. The family in the city often does not constitute a play group for the developing child. If he learns co-operation it must be learned outside the family circle. Modern methods of child-rearing do little to develop discipline and obedience to authority; and, in fact, often encourage anarchy and paranoid trends. But this countercurrent of social products coming from the modern family only re-establishes its importance as a primary group in which the essential aspects and patterns of character are molded and developed. It is perhaps in the family more than elsewhere that the individual gets his pattern of life and early sets which are often misinterpreted as instincts.

The economic functions of the family have, as most writers have pointed out, either declined in importance or disappeared.<sup>1</sup> Industry no longer is found in the home. Even the preparation of foods and the washing of clothes have been largely taken over by outside agencies. There continues to be some communal division of income, but this has been greatly restricted. Separate bank accounts by husbands and wives are not uncommon even when only one is a wage-earner. Children rarely upon reaching the wage-earning age turn their earnings into the common fund, as was once a universal practice.

Another much-discussed function is that of the regulation of sex expression. It is the performance of this function that has called out much of the modern criticism of the fam-

<sup>1</sup> See esp. Ogburn, *Social Change*, pp. 240-45.

ily. In performing this function, it is argued, modern marriage customs are defective since there is no way of knowing in advance whether or not the two persons involved are physically mated. Many discussions of this phase of family life seem to be inadequate, owing to overemphasis upon sexual relations. Sexual relations constitute only a very restricted phase of the desire for response, which is in modern urban life the most pronounced motive for marriage. The concept of mismating is highly fictitious so far as it is thought to be primarily physiological. This is not to deny that sex conflicts are unimportant, but only to assert that whatever physiological basis there is for such conflicts could be remedied in the great majority of cases were it not for the overlay of attitudes and customs.

There is no doubt, also, but that the family functions as an educational agency, though that function has been in many respects transferred to the school. Common sense has long emphasized the importance of the family in the training of the child. Yet the pronouncements of common sense are often misleading because incomplete. These statements declare that the family serves the function of preparing the child for later life by training him in various types of adjustment and by passing on to him the culture of his group. The implication often is, whether explicitly stated or not, that the family consciously directs the development of the child, and should do so in the "right" way. This outlook is fallacious in its overemphasis upon the conscious aspects of the process and in its moralistic approach. Actually what happens is somewhat as follows: The family provides a matrix for the development and integration of response processes. It provides for the child a set of response patterns in terms of which all future responses will be judged. It is not



the consciously conceived regimen which is of utmost importance for the development of personality, but the organization of behavior which the child absorbs spontaneously. This process of acquisition may provide the child with a highly integrated personality or a loosely integrated one, and so with a molding hand determine his success or failure in meeting the problems of life.

The functional approach is thus often misleading, owing to the connotations of conscious direction toward preconceived ends. Actually, from the standpoint of method, the ends are there only upon reflection following the effort which is conceived as directed toward them. Thus the ends constitute what Vaihinger has so aptly called a "fiction."<sup>1</sup> The functional approach is undoubtedly useful in giving meaning to much of human effort, but only when used in this fictional sense as a frame of reference in terms of which to organize observations into an orderly system. Human experience precedes any such organization, though it may be reinforced later by such explanations, which in a sense take the form of rationalizations.

Yet it is clear that the family serves to satisfy certain fundamental needs of human nature, and it is because of this that it gets its social sanction. These needs find satisfaction in the mutual relations which the family provides. Not that the family has any exclusive claim to all these relations, though it does have to some, but that on the whole no other sort of arrangement has been found which operates with as much satisfaction as does the family.

#### INTERDEPENDENCE IN FAMILY LIFE

A large part of the success of the family, so far as the individual is concerned, grows out of the fact that it pro-

<sup>1</sup> Vaihinger, *The Philosophy of As If* (trans. C. K. Ogden).

vides a relatively stable set of relations upon which the individual can depend. Since these relations result in mutual security, one may speak of them as phases of interdependence, to be classified in terms of the various realms or aspects of family life which they cover: (1) biological, (2) economic, (3) emotional, and (4) cultural.

Biological interdependence is, of course, the most elemental, growing out of the bisexual nature of man. In all mature individuals, whether male or female, there is recurrent need for sexual expression unless that impulse has become atrophied by sexual indulgence or puritanical taboos. Family relations afford a more satisfactory arrangement for the fulfilment of these impulses than any other, even when in extra-marital relations the prevention of conception is assured.

The superiority of the family relationship as the milieu for sexual intercourse grows out of two closely related facts: the tendency for novelty in sexual relations to lead to satiety and revulsion, and the transformation of the original sex impulse into a combination of instinct and sentiment. As the life of man becomes less basically organic and more social, sex becomes the core of a whole system of attitudes, feelings, and sentiments. Satisfaction of the sexual impulse in marriage takes its meaning from the way in which it comes to stand for the whole network of mutual interests, aspirations, and helpfulness.

The second phase of biological interdependence lies in the relations between parents and children. Not only is the child dependent upon the mother for care and nourishment during its early life, but the mother finds in this relationship the most satisfactory expression of some of her most characteristic needs—the desire for intimate responsiveness. While the relations between the child and the father tend to par-

take of some of the same elements as that between the mother and the child, biological interdependence tends to give way to the economic.

The economic dependency of the child upon the father, of course, grows out of its helplessness during the early years of its life. The mother is in much the same position for a period covering at least the latter part of pregnancy and a few weeks after the birth of the child. In both instances the economic dependency grows out of the physical inability of the persons to support themselves. In many societies these basic periods are lengthened by custom. In America this lengthening for the child tends to extend to adulthood. Wives, on the other hand, may be economically dependent upon their husbands throughout their married lives.

It might seem at first, from what has just been said, that economic dependency is one-sided. This, however, is not the case. While the young child in no way contributes to the economic support of the family, he does give it security. The security which the child insures may be divided into three phases: (1) The problem of the disposal of property upon death is taken care of through the medium of the child. (2) The child may contribute toward the common cause for a varying period before his own marriage. (3) In old age the child may assume the responsibility for the support of the parents. The prospect of realizing any of these constitutes a form of dependency of the parents upon the child.

In the case of the wife the husband tends to be dependent upon her for some services, though these may be simplified until they constitute little more than the direction of servants. In other instances, however, there are many activities connected with maintaining a home which belong in the economic realm and which are performed by the wife.

Another phase of economic interdependency, though fast disappearing in the city, is the co-operative economic activities carried on by the family. Many products have, from time to time, been made in the home through the co-operative efforts of various members of the family. This decline in common economic activities, however, is only symptomatic of a general decline in modern life of the rôle of economic interdependence as a phase of family life. But as one phase of interdependence declines in importance other phases tend to increase. This is especially true of the emotional.

#### EMOTIONAL INTERDEPENDENCE

One of the most pronounced and striking phases of modern life is the repression of the emotions. The emotions, for example, have no place in business. A business man is supposed to be cold, unfeeling, and "hard-boiled." Exchange, if not reduced to a matter of fixed prices, at least is unemotional and objective. Precautions are taken to prevent emotional situations from arising. Even contacts with friends and acquaintances tend to be perfunctory and formal. Social affairs are governed by etiquette, and if emotional outbursts are permitted they must be at the proper moment and in the proper form. Spontaneity gives way to stereotyped reactions and conventional blaséness. The result tends to be to make the family all the more important as the setting for emotional expression.

It is in the family circle, accordingly, that the individual feels at ease. Here the formal requirements of business and social intercourse can be dropped. Here it is that pretense and suspicion are no longer required and are, in fact, looked upon as inimical to harmonious family life. It is in the family circle that one feels that he can obtain a true perspective

of himself even though that view be not wholly flattering. Thus the family becomes the locale for the expression of the emotions, and its success is judged in terms of the extent to which it provides opportunity for spontaneity of expression of deep-seated impulses which have no place in the contacts with the larger group.

This tendency in modern life to center much of the emotional expression of the individual in the family circle has, however, two effects, both of which tend to make the family relationship more precarious. In the first place, much of the impulses of anger and hatred find their expression in the family circle since expression elsewhere would be inimical to the success of the individual. Release in the family seems comparatively safe and provides a convenient source of occasions for expression of pent-up impulses in disguised forms. Members of the family thus become the scapegoat upon whom are projected the failures of other members of the family. To the extent, of course, to which individual members do not appreciate what is happening, the stability of the family is threatened by these outbursts.

In the second place, the family has increased in importance as a locale for the expression of affection and the desire for comradeship. It is in the family that one most effectively finds satisfaction for what Thomas has called the "desire for response."<sup>1</sup> The family provides one with that intimate feeling of appreciation and sympathetic responsiveness to one's moods which seems to be the natural craving of most human beings. Life's disappointments become all the more keen without it, and pleasures lose much of their glow where this intimate responsiveness is lacking. This, again, may be

<sup>1</sup> See Thomas, *The Unadjusted Girl*, pp. 17-31.

a source of irritation in modern family life, threatening its stability and the continuance of the relationship once it has been entered into. Because so much emphasis is placed upon mutual satisfaction of the desire for response, the attainment of which calls for a continuous process of adjustment, it is often difficult for individuals fully to realize their desires.

In the strength of the desire for response there seems to be little evidence to indicate any fundamental difference between the two sexes. Nowhere has prejudice interfered more than in the discussion of sexual differences. When physiological differences are left out of account, there is little evidence to indicate any very striking differences between men and women except for a tendency for women to be more personal and emotional in their interests than are men. That this difference is innate, however, is extremely doubtful. A much simpler and more plausible explanation may be seen in the culture of the group which places a premium upon each member conforming to the stereotyped responses of his sex. The regimen of training through which the little girl passes emphasizes the necessity of reacting to persons rather than to things. It is her lot to be pleasing, pretty, and affectionate.<sup>1</sup> Sexual differences, thus, grow out of our double standards and may be expected largely to disappear as women participate in the activities of men.

Much of the satisfaction of family life, accordingly, grows out of mutual helpfulness and the sharing in common activities. It is true, as Conrad has said, that the man who has not helped with the dishes is still a celibate. In the sharing of homely responsibilities lies much of the emotional

<sup>1</sup> Allport, *Social Psychology*, pp. 345-47.

interdependence in family life. It is at this point, also, that emotional interdependence passes over into cultural interdependence.

#### CULTURAL INTERDEPENDENCE

The importance of cultural interdependence in the modern family is greatly increased, owing to the continual flux in the culture of the larger group. The self-respect of the individual is to a large extent dependent upon some degree of stability in his standards of conduct. In the secondary group where all standards tend to be relative and therefore continually shifting, the individual tends to be at a loss to preserve his integrity. If he does not succeed in compartmentalizing his personality, he finds himself constantly torn by mental conflict. He finds in the family, accordingly, that balance which preserves his self-respect, even in the face of a constant demand in his outside contacts for a continual shifting of ballast. This phase of cultural dependence is often more keenly felt on the part of the man than the woman, but as women come more and more to be co-operators rather than housewives, they too become more dependent upon family contacts for reassurance and the preservation of the unity of their personalities.

In the family, also, many of the practices which have been handed down from generation to generation tend to be preserved. Mutual appreciation of taste in manners and dress, in likes and dislikes, in aversions and prejudices, are to be found in the family circle. It is in the family that one's aspirations and interests get their most sympathetic hearing. What in the larger group passes for garrulousness and conceit is accepted in the family as the essence of mutual adjustment.

Another aspect of cultural interdependence concerns the culture traits developed by the family itself. Words take on meanings peculiar to the family itself, and much satisfaction is realized out of this exclusive understanding. Proverbs and jokes, intelligible to no outsider, symbolize the unity of the family with its mutual respect and dependence. Family ceremonies, family traditions and ritual, provide a common experience out of which develop satisfactions to be obtained nowhere else. Family secrets and the family romance also provide each member of the family with cultural elements which tend to become a part of the core of each personality making up the family. Thus the family builds up a realm of experience into which no outsider can enter to any degree, opening up to the individual participant an area of satisfactions which could not be had were it not for these interdependencies.

The family provides, accordingly, an environment conducive to the satisfaction of some of the most essential needs of the individual. The relations within this group differ from those within the larger group in that they are more familiar and do not require the high degree of artificiality which characterizes many social adjustments. The individual finds himself at ease in the family—he knows his way around, so to speak. And it is out of this need for security that family life seems to develop, so far as the individual is concerned.

There is, however, another aspect of the family which needs to be taken into account. Not only does the family provide the milieu for the satisfaction of many of the fundamental wishes of the individual, but it also determines to a certain extent the whole pattern of social relations. Social relations, if not fashioned by the family, are at least greatly



influenced by the experiences of family life. Thus the family serves in a broad sense as a matrix of society.

#### THE MATRIX OF SOCIETY

To begin with, the family serves, so to speak, as the prototype of other institutions. A widely accepted theory of the evolution of the state, for example, begins with the family. According to this theory, the state developed directly out of the family organization—particularly out of the patriarchal family. In the patriarchal family the patriarch functioned not only as the head of the family but as priest, lawgiver, and judge. The group consisted not only of the members of the immediate family, but of the whole band of relatives as well. As the group became larger it became a clan, ruled by the descendants of the original patriarch. Later the tie of kinship tended to yield to the tie of common territory, resulting in tribal organization, but with one family still playing the rôle of ruler. A state or nation in turn developed out of a combination or organization of tribes.<sup>1</sup>

While modern scholars are critical of the culture-stage theory, as far as the family is concerned, there is some truth in the essential aspects of this evolutionary picture. The family is a "little" society embodying the fundamental elements of the larger society. There are few social relations which are not in a sense derivatives of family relations. Only a few of these essential elements need be considered to show the influence of family relations upon the patterns of social intercourse.

One of the essential features of the family is that of paternal or parental authority. The individual learns that at some points, at least, he must defer to the wishes of others.

<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., Morgan, *Ancient Society*, pp. 505-15.

This deference, he soon learns, is not based upon critical consideration of merits, but is, as a matter of social sanction, the prerogative of the older group. Thus the division of persons into those in authority and those not in authority develops early in the life of the individual, having its inception in the family. And whether the individual accepts the arrangement or rebels against it, his relations with such persons as school-teachers, policemen, judges, priests, physicians, lawyers, and public officials are determined to a large extent by the sort of paternal or parental authority found in the family.

Family relations also call for personal adjustments similar to those later met with in the larger groups. The relations between brothers and sisters, and even between children and parents, lead to the development of responses which either fit or hamper the individual for the larger social adjustments. The ability to get along with others, just as the devices for avoidance of contacts, often have their inception in the family. The difficulties of the "only child" to adjust to group life is largely due to the development of patterns of response in the family which are inappropriate in the larger group. So, also, children brought up in large families tend to have already experienced in family life the sort of adjustments required in the larger group.

The family thus tends to provide a locale in which the individual is trained in the process of accommodation. And whether these accommodations take the form of conforming to social sanction in the recognition of authority, or to adjustments to the immediate situation, they are in their essential character matters of the subordinations and subordinations of which life is so full. From the standpoint of the individual, of course, the family may either hamper or

facilitate the most effective organization of personality in the patterns of subordination and superordination which it builds up. From the standpoint of society, the family tends in the long run to determine the forms of accommodation which will be accepted in all groups. It is hard, for example, to conceive of a nation retaining a monarchical form of government in the face of widespread democratic relations within its families.

#### SOCIAL CONTROL AND THE FAMILY

Another aspect in which the family serves as a matrix for the social groupings of society is in the matter of social control. The individual receives his first experience in social control in the family, and though he may have more experience with some of the techniques than with others, the tendency is for all of the elementary forms to be represented in the family.

The family controls the behavior of the individual by defining situations. This it may do either by suppressing the impulses of the individual or by defining impulses in such a way as to direct their expression into socially approved channels. The first method may be called "negative" control whereas the second is "positive." Of the two, the methods of suppression are the most common in the family just as they are in society.

One method of suppressing individual impulses is to prevent the appearance of opportunity for expression of those which are considered socially undesirable. The child, for example, may be hedged about with all sorts of restrictions. He may be permitted to play only with certain groups; he may not be allowed to go to the cinema; constant surveillance may be exercised to shelter him from unpleasant experiences. In this way many impulses may be denied ex-

pression to the extent to which the family is able to foresee what situations will call out undesirable impulses and to the extent to which it is able to control the appearance of such situations.

A much more common method of suppression consists of all those devices by which praise and blame are attached to acts. This method may be called "ordering and forbidding" and is that by which crises are met by an act of will decreeing the appearance of what is considered desirable and condemning what is thought undesirable.<sup>1</sup> The most common of the devices in this group are gossip, the use of epithets, gestures, and taboos. Gossip is, of course, much more common in the larger family group than in the smaller. Epithets, while less scathing than those commonly employed in society as a whole, are still sufficiently debasing to be highly effective in putting an individual "in his place." Gestures and commands, also, inform the child of the wishes of the elders. Taboos define situations which are to be avoided, whether expressed in terms of the familiar "don't" or as mutually recognized topics which are never to be mentioned.

Much of the effectiveness of the "ordering and forbidding" techniques is due to their usage in connection with another method of control—namely, punishment. Punishment consists of creating some sort of pain or irksome circumstance, following the commission of some forbidden act or the failure to perform some act which has been commanded, such as to prevent the recurrence of the transgression. And such punishment takes the form of the inflicting of bodily pain, restriction of bodily movements, or the denial of privileges.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Thomas and Znaniecki, *The Polish Peasant* (rev. ed.), I, 3.

The family also functions as a control agency by defining and directing the expression of impulses. Some of the most common of these techniques are persuasion, conventionalization, the use of myths and legends, suggestion, ceremonialization, and sublimation. Persuasion takes the form of presenting advice, arguments, and reasons for certain lines of conduct. Suggestion is closely related to persuasion except that the initiating elements to conduct are so presented as to identify the individual with them and to make them appear to arise within himself. By this process of indirection members of the family control one another in crisis situations much more thoroughly than they could through persuasion.

Conventionalization may be either in time or in place. Certain types of conduct are permitted, and even encouraged, at certain times and in certain places which otherwise would be frowned upon. Thus demonstrations of affection are encouraged within the home and discouraged outside; the newspaper may be read at the breakfast table but not at the dinner table, etc. Myths and legends also play a rôle in family control, such as the family romance, the family history, etc. Much of the family life may be hedged by ceremonials and ritual. The celebration of anniversaries and birthdays are potent factors in controlling the conduct of the members of the family.

All these techniques of control in the family are to be found in society as well. Much of the effectiveness of social control, therefore, is a function of the training which the individual has had in responding to these techniques in the family. If the patterns of conduct in the family run at cross-purposes to those in the larger group, there are difficulties in the way of social control. Thus, in many instances at

least, the so-called conflict between the individual and society turns out to be a conflict between the family and society.

The relation between family and social control is best represented by the contrast between formal and informal control. The family is the basic agency of informal control whereas formal control is exercised through the community. And while formal control is a derivative of the informal control in the family, its chief characteristics differentiate it rather sharply from control in the family. Formal control, because it depends upon the coercive processes of law and the courts, finds itself seriously hampered if out of harmony with the patterns of conduct built up in the family. In its transmission of patterns of conduct, therefore, the family performs an important function.

#### SOCIAL INHERITANCE AND THE FAMILY

It is from this angle that family life is particularly closely related to social life. Much of the transmission of social patterns is through the medium of the family. Prior to the widespread use of printing, most of the techniques of the artisan were passed from one generation to another within the family. Much of the conservation of material culture in the form of real and personal property has been through the family. The family also has functioned as the carrier from generation to generation of the techniques of the arts and of knowledge of all sorts. As education has been transferred more and more to the school and to the workshop, the family has become less and less important in this realm.

Yet the family has been by no means superseded by the community as an agency for the transmission of culture from generation to generation. Many of the elements of non-

material culture, particularly those generally called the folk ways and the mores, are still to a large extent a concern of the family. Thus the family serves as a balance wheel of society in passing on to the new generation the patterns of conduct of the old. Whether these patterns be socially desirable or not, they tend to remain throughout life the core of the individual's character and pattern of life. Many of the most severe conflicts in the life of the individual, accordingly, grow out of fundamental contradictions between the standards of conduct carried over from the family and those accepted by later groups in which the individual finds himself. The so-called "pangs of conscience" represent reinstatement of the family code as the criterion of judgment in reflecting upon one's conduct where that conduct has been in accord with standards of a group at variance with those of the family.

In its attachment of emotional content to patterns of behavior the family builds up not only a core of ultimate values, but also a philosophy of life which serves as a basic element in the selection of social patterns throughout life. Much of the essential character of a society grows out of the nature of these basic elements developed and transmitted through the family.

It is in the family, accordingly, that the essential features of human nature develop, just as it is also in those same relations that the impulses of human nature find their fullest expression and satisfaction. Society in turn, reflecting upon the practices which have sprung up spontaneously in the form of family relations, turns them into institutions by sanctioning certain forms, and attempts thereby to control the behavior of individuals through these institutions. In this way the family becomes something more than the locale

for the satisfaction of human impulses, or even the matrix of society, but turns back upon itself, so to speak, and becomes an institution of control, revamping alike human nature and family relations.

#### SUGGESTED READINGS

Bosanquet. *The Family*, chaps. viii and ix.

Briffault. *The Mothers*, Vol. I, chaps. iv and v.

Flügel. *The Psycho-Analytic Study of the Family*, chaps. ii and iii.

Groves. *Social Problems of the Family*, chap. iv.

Ogburn. "Social Heritage and the Family," chap. ii in Rich, *Family Life Today*.

Reed. *The Modern Family*, chaps. i and iii.

Reuter and Runner. *The Family*, chap. x.

Thomas. *Sex and Society*, pp. 3-51 and 223-47.

Westermarck. *The History of Human Marriage* (5th ed.), chap. i.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE FAMILY AS A SOCIAL INSTITUTION

Family forms, while developing out of human nature, have also been a factor in the formation of human nature by virtue of the fact that social sanction has surrounded customary practices and preserved them for future generations. Thus the family is something more than a set of relations for the satisfaction of certain impulses of human nature; it is also an institution, a mechanism of control. In fact, this latter phase of the family has received more attention in the literature than has the former, many of the most extensive treatises dealing with the family almost exclusively as a social institution.

An institution, according to Sumner,<sup>1</sup> consists of a concept and a structure. The function and purpose of the institution are defined in the concept. The idea of the institution is embodied in the structure, as well as are the instrumentalities necessary for bringing it into action in such a way as to serve the interests of the society which has given it social sanction. The structure of an institution, however, is not physical, or at least not entirely so, but consists of sets of relations to which are attached permanently connected functions. The structure is thus the "cake of custom" embodying a definite social function.

Institutions are definite and sanctioned forms or modes of relationship between social beings, in respect to one another or to some external object. Associations . . . imply and depend on organization. If

<sup>1</sup> *Folkways*, pp. 53-56.

several people are to co-operate in the execution of a common task, there must be division of labor, rules of procedure and the like. In other words, the relations between the individuals of the association must be defined and receive a common sanction. This happens whenever the association has a certain permanence and rests on ends which are of vital importance. In this way there arise customs and laws, rules of procedure, systems of work which we call institutions. The associations are living together for common ends; the institutions it would be better to regard as forms of relations between them, ways of action among associated individuals which have received social sanction.<sup>1</sup>

Sumner further differentiates between what he calls "crescive" and "enacted" institutions. A crescive institution is one which has developed out of the instinctive efforts by which the mores are produced. Crescive institutions are thus rooted in the mores. Enacted institutions, on the other hand, are the products of human intention and invention. This class of institutions grows out of rational attempts to adjust to social situations. Yet even this type of institution rests upon the mores, for should no social situation exist to which the institution corresponds, it will perform no real function and remain a mere artefact or paper project.<sup>2</sup>

The family is, in the terminology of Sumner, a crescive institution. Its origin is in the mores and, while conscious effort has from time to time been directed toward modifying the crescive form, little impression has been made upon the essential structure of the family. And yet there have been, in the course of historical development, many changes in the family—changes which have grown up by trial and error. The result is that when viewed historically, or comparatively, a wide variety of family forms is discovered.

<sup>1</sup> Ginsberg, *The Psychology of Society*, p. 122.

<sup>2</sup> Park and Burgess, *Introduction to the Science of Sociology*, pp. 796-97.

It is not surprising, accordingly, that much interest in the family has been absorbed in its institutional aspects. What are the essential features of the institutional family, as well as the limitations of this method of approach to the study of family relations, may be discovered by a survey of the studies of the family as an institution.

#### HISTORICAL STUDY OF THE FAMILY

It is the object of any historical account of the family to paint a picture of family practices under past conditions. The task of the historian is to piece together whatever records he may find in such a way as to portray a continuous succession of events as they are thought to have actually occurred in time and space.

The task of piecing together all the records of family life is, however, ordinarily too formidable for any particular historian. He limits himself, accordingly, to the family in a given country, or to a group of geographical areas in which the family is thought to be historically connected. In this way he takes as a guide in the selection of accounts some cultural succession in which he is particularly interested, usually that in which he participates.

Any historical account is further selective in another sense in that it is based upon fragmentary knowledge. This is particularly true of the history of the family, since for earlier historical periods at least those who wrote about the happenings of the day were chiefly concerned with the affairs of state and the activities of kings. The historian of family life, therefore, only too often is compelled to depend upon the most indirect references to family practices. And even when there are fairly direct accounts, these are limited in scope to a restricted class of the population and may

therefore be far from typical. The situation is, in fact, somewhat like attempting to write a history of the modern family upon the basis of the accounts in the society columns of newspapers.

Historical accounts of the family are fragmentary also in another way. Only certain aspects of family life find their way into the records. These aspects have to do with those phases of family relations which have come in for formal regulation on the part of the group. These have to do chiefly with betrothal, marriage, divorce, division of property, and the training of children. Neither are there always data bearing upon the same elements of the phases covered for each of the periods within the time range of the account. It is not unusual, accordingly, to find that aspects of family life described quite fully in one period are almost or entirely neglected in other periods, owing to the fragmentary nature of the records. Nevertheless, a historical account provides an indispensable orientation for the study of the family.

One of the best of the historical accounts of the family is that of Goodsell.<sup>1</sup> Her book is chiefly an attempt to trace the development of certain social practices connected with the patriarchal family of the Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans to those of the democratic American family of the present. She does, however, precede this treatment with a chapter on the primitive family.<sup>2</sup>

The common characteristic of the family among the Hebrews, the Greeks, and the Romans, as Goodsell points out, is the autocratic powers of the husband and father.

<sup>1</sup> *History of the Family as an Educational and Social Institution.*

<sup>2</sup> In this chapter Miss Goodsell departs from orthodox historical procedure and introduces data from anthropology. Accordingly, in this chapter historical method gives way to the comparative.

This feature of family organization thus establishes the rights and privileges of the various members of the family as the central theme for the earlier chapters of Goodsell. Her description becomes, accordingly, a panorama of the changing status of women and children as one passes from the patriarchal family, with its closely knit organization centering around the authority of the male, to the loosely knit American family with its democratic organization.

Throughout Goodsell's treatise emphasis is placed primarily upon the organization of the family, marriage customs and laws, divorce and home life. In discussing the organization of the family at different periods, the chief features treated are the relation of the family to the larger social group, the form of organization including the tracing of descent, the status of the various members, and property rights. Betrothal, the nuptials, and sexual relations outside the family constitute the most frequently discussed aspects of marriage customs and laws. The aspects of home life most frequently emphasized have to do with the furnishing of the home, household industries, and the training of children.

Goodsell also introduces at the first of her book a chapter on the so-called primitive family. In so doing, however, she departs from the use of the historical method and adopts for the moment the comparative method which utilizes anthropological rather than historical data. This procedure adds length to the panorama but does not change essentially its historical character.

Two more contributions of the historical study of the family are of particular importance: Howard's<sup>1</sup> and Cal-

<sup>1</sup> *A History of Matrimonial Institutions.*

houn's.<sup>1</sup> Both, however, cover a much shorter period than does the book by Goodsell. Howard's book, though it carries the rather broad title *A History of Matrimonial Institutions*, is restricted in scope by the subtitle, *Chiefly in England and the United States with an Introductory Analysis of the Literature and the Theories of Primitive Marriage and the Family*. In method, accordingly, this book represents a combination of the historical and the comparative. As a history of the family, Howard's treatment is chiefly confined to the period beginning with the Middle Ages and ending with the beginning of the twentieth century. Furthermore, as the subtitle indicates, the scope is restricted to the English and American family except for some attention to the connections between the English family and Roman civilization. These connections are treated chiefly in two chapters: one on the rise of ecclesiastical marriage<sup>2</sup> and the other on the Protestant conception of marriage.<sup>3</sup>

Howard further restricts his treatment by centering his attention upon the legal aspects of the institutional family. He is primarily concerned, accordingly, with the historical development of the legal status of the family institution to the partial, though not complete, neglect of its social status. Throughout Howard's discussion, therefore, the rules governing marriage, whether promulgated by the church or by the state, are of chief concern. This emphasis upon the legal aspects of marriage and the family may be seen in the titles of his chapters: "Old English Wife-Purchase Yields to Free Marriage," "Rise of Ecclesiastical Marriage," "The Protestant Conception of Marriage," "Rise of Civil Marriage,"

<sup>1</sup> *A Social History of the American Family*.

<sup>2</sup> Chaps. vii and viii.

<sup>3</sup> Chap. ix.

"History of Separation and Divorce under English and Ecclesiastical Law," "Obligatory Civil Marriage in the New England Colonies," "Ecclesiastical Rites and the Rise of Civil Marriage in the Southern Colonies," "Optional Civil or Ecclesiastical Marriage in the Middle Colonies," "Divorce in the American Colonies," and "A Century and a Quarter of Divorce Legislation in the United States."

Calhoun,<sup>1</sup> on the other hand, while restricting his treatment to the family in the United States from the colonial period to the present,<sup>2</sup> includes a wider range of institutional aspects. The author, in fact, defines both his objective and the scope of his work in the Preface to the first volume:

The three volumes of which this is the first are an attempt to develop an understanding of the forces that have been operative in the evolution of family institutions in the United States. They set forth the nature of the influences that have shaped marriage, controlled fecundity, determined the respective status of father, mother, child, attached relative, and servant, influenced sexual morality, and governed the function of the family as an educational, economic, moral and spiritual institution as also its relation to state, industry, and society in general in the matter of social control.<sup>3</sup>

Calhoun has, however, gone farther than any other historian of the American family in an attempt to show the relation between changes in the social, economic, and political organization and the evolution of the family. Some idea of his analysis of these interpenetrations may be gained by reference to his own description of the contents of the three volumes:

The first volume of the series covers the colonial period and sets forth the germination of the American family as a product of European

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> Except for two chapters on "Old World Origins."

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, I, 9.

folkways, of the economic transition to modern capitalism, and of the distinctive environment of a virgin continent. . . . In general, the colonial family is presented as a property institution dominated by middle class standards, and operating as an agency of social control in the midst of a social order governed by the interests of a forceful aristocracy which shaped religion, education, politics, and all else to its own profit. . . .

In the second volume, the period from Independence through the Civil War is covered under five main heads: the influence of pioneering and the frontier, the rise of urban industrialism, the growth of luxury and extravagance, the culmination of the régime of slavery, and the consequences of the Civil War. . . .

The third volume analyzes the factors that have consummated the revolution of the family during the past fifty years. Stress is laid on the advance of industrialism, the growth of the larger capitalism, the immigrant invasion, the passing of the frontier, the intensification of the struggle for the standard of living, the movements of rebellion and revolution represented by such manifestations as feminism and socialism, and the outlook for a democratic future. . . .<sup>1</sup>

Historical studies of the family, accordingly, portray the past upon the assumption that a knowledge of what has preceded is a prerequisite to the understanding of the present. Or, to put it differently, the historian attempts to view the past in perspective in such a way as to distinguish trends and so discover the continuity between the present, future, and past. In this way one is able to understand the present as the link between past and future, and the future as the extension of the past.

Interpretation is in terms of the inherent nature of social institutions and structures which are conceived as factual potencies. The volition of the bearers of these institutional or structural forms have little to do with the changes which develop out of this inherent nature, except to impede or

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.



stimulate the movement. The explanatory causes lie, therefore, not in individual or collective volition, but in the inherent nature of the social structures and institutions expressing itself as mechanical necessity.<sup>1</sup>

Calhoun has elaborated upon this interpretative aspect more fully than the other writers on the family by relating, as his Preface indicates, changes in the American family to such social changes as the rise of urban industrialism, the passing of the frontier, the immigrant invasion, etc. In this way the explanatory causes of changes in the family are taken to lie in the inherent nature and potency of these other structural or institutional changes.

This picture of the changing forms of family organization, as given by historical accounts, serves as a wholesome corrective to the assumptions of conservatives that the pattern of the family is unchanging and should be preserved in its traditional form. It also serves as a corrective to the assumptions of the radical reformers that human volition can produce any sort of family organization irrespective of its relation to other phases of social life.

Historical studies of the family, however, are limited in time and place by the necessity of being confined to peoples having a written language. The growing acceptance of the evolutionary point of view has made the period of written history seem relatively insignificant to many scholars in comparison to the great stretch of history for which there are no written records. The result has been to supplement historical data with facts collected by travelers, missionaries, and anthropologists, concerning the family among so-called primitive peoples.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Spykman, *The Social Theory of Georg Simmel*, pp. 60-61.

## ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE FAMILY

While there have been other significant studies of the family based upon anthropological data, such as Letourneau, *The Evolution of Marriage and of the Family*, and Grosse, *Die Formen der Familie und die Formen der Wirtschaft*—not to mention many monographs upon particular peoples<sup>1</sup>—the most comprehensive treatment is that of Westermarck.

*The History of Human Marriage* is concerned with two problems relative to the family among “primitive” peoples, namely, the problem of origins and that of evolution. Of these two problems that of origins receives the greater attention; with reference not only to marriage but to other related practices, such as celibacy, courtship, modesty, and sexual attraction.

Prior to the publication of Westermarck’s treatment in 1891, there had been considerable discussion on the part of a number of writers about the origin of the family. The most prominent of these writers accepted the hypothesis of promiscuity or communal marriage in which the men of an unorganized horde or tribe had the women in common. Sexual relations under these conditions, however, are not assumed to have been wholly indiscriminate, since such relations were restricted to the members of the group within a particular locality. For this reason this stage is often referred to as communal or group marriage.

The most significant contribution of Westermarck is his attack upon the hypothesis of promiscuity. His thesis is that marriage developed out of the “primeval habit” of

<sup>1</sup> Such studies, e.g., as Malinowski, *The Family among the Australian Aborigines*; Thomas, *Kinship Organizations and Group Marriage in Australia*, etc.

single-pairing carried over from man's prehuman ancestors. To support this hypothesis, Westermarck cites facts from "primitive" peoples to show the universality of monogamy as a form of human marriage. He also carefully examines the so-called evidence of promiscuity to show the unreliability of the descriptions, or to point out the possibility of other interpretations.

Earlier writers, also, had worked out descriptions of the stages of evolution through which the family had passed. The most widely accepted of these theories is, perhaps, that of Friedrichs, who proposed the following stages: group marriage, polyandry, polygyny, and monogamy.<sup>1</sup> Group marriage, according to this view, developed out of horde marriage or promiscuity. In group marriage, a kinship group of men married in common a kinship group of women. Polyandry, according to this view, developed out of unfavorable conditions of life which produced a disparity between the number of men and women. More successful conditions, however, secured through the subjugation of large numbers in the population, who were either not permitted to marry or whose condition prevented marriage, produced a surplus of women and led to polygyny. This practice in turn gave way to monogamy as a result of conditions favoring the elevation of women.

Westermarck again has shown the fallacies of these earlier writings on the family by citing facts to demonstrate the intermixture of the various forms of the family. Group marriage, polyandry, and polygyny are, accordingly, simply variations upon the more common form, monogamy, since the practice of single-pairing appears universally with the

<sup>1</sup> "Familienstufen und Eheformen," *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Rechtswissenschaft*, X, 256-58, cited in Howard, *op. cit.*, I, 55.

other forms. In this way Westermarck, while he espouses and defends the comparative method, actually contributes data to show its defects. The fundamental error in the comparative method is the assumption that the cultures of savage peoples represent successive stages in the evolution of the human race. Thus the comparative anthropologist takes as his basic axiom the assumption that the cultures of savage peoples represent various degrees of retardation, filling in the gap between the beginning of culture to the period covered by historical records. Such an assumption is obviously fallacious since the peoples themselves are relatively contemporary, and since the continuities between the various cultures have been lost.<sup>1</sup>

The theory of the origin of marriage proposed by Westermarck is on no more firm ground than the theories of the evolution of the family so tellingly attacked by him. But since that feature has already been amply discussed,<sup>2</sup> one may proceed to a consideration of other aspects of *The History of Human Marriage*.

The chief topics in Westermarck's treatment outside of the origin of marriage are celibacy, sexual modesty, courtship, means of attraction, sexual selection, endogamy, exogamy, modes of contracting marriage, marriage rites, forms of marriage, and the duration of marriage. In discussing these topics the method of interpretation varies, but four types tend to predominate: (1) explanation of origins by tracing a particular practice to the animal world and so introducing the concept of instinct. This type of explanation may be seen in the tracing of polyandry to the relative absence of jealousy among men where polyandry is prac-

<sup>1</sup> For further discussion of the comparative method see pp. 294-95.

<sup>2</sup> See above, pp. 42-44.

ticed.<sup>1</sup> (2) Explanation in terms of natural selection as illustrated in the tracing of sexual selection to racial characters which act as sexual stimulants.<sup>2</sup> (3) Explanation by showing the sequence of development from the lower races to the higher. This type of explanation may be illustrated in the discussion of consent as a condition of marriage, beginning with such tribes as the Algonkin and the natives of Banks Islands, and coming down to present-day France.<sup>3</sup> (4) Explanation in terms of conscious desires, as may be illustrated in the explanation of certain marriage rites in terms of the desire to insure fertility of the marriage pair.<sup>4</sup>

The essential fallacy in the treatment of these other phases of marriage and the family is, accordingly, the same as that in the discussion of the origin of marriage, namely, the deductiveness involved in the use of the comparative method. While it is true that Westermarck has avoided the pitfall into which such writers as Friedrichs and Bachofen fell in attempting to differentiate sharply defined stages of evolution, he has nevertheless superimposed his facts upon an evolutionary framework. In so doing Westermarck has followed the practice of other comparative anthropologists of taking certain culture forms out of their settings and considering these forms with reference to one another and to an evolutionary sequence, without any reference to the other practices with which they were found. The sequence, accordingly, is a postulate in the comparative scheme without which the facts from the different peoples are but fragmentary bits.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The History of Human Marriage* (5th ed.), III, 206-7.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 22-24.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. II, chap. xxii.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. II, chap. xxvi.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Goldenweiser, *Early Civilization*, pp. 22-23 n.

Anthropology cannot, therefore, bridge the gap between the first appearance of man and the beginning of written history as far as the family is concerned, as many writers have assumed. Anthropological data are not historical in their nature any more than are descriptions of the contemporary practices among modern peoples. The origin of marriage and of the family, as well as of many of the practices related to family life, have been irretrievably lost. Anthropology has, however, like history, added to one's comprehension and understanding of the family by furnishing descriptions of a wide variety of family forms and practices. This varied picture of the family in a wide variety of social settings serves as a wholesome corrective to the assumption often made by reformers that traditional forms can or should be preserved without reference to the changing social conditions.<sup>1</sup> Like history, however, anthropology has been concerned with descriptions of concrete forms and patterns of family life rather than with the description of the process of adjustment and accommodation between the members of the family group. The more formal elements of family organization, accordingly, in which not only the members of the family participate, but also the members of the community, have received the major attention.

#### THE SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH

The sociological approach had its origin in the problems of the family. Two types of situations served as subjects for this approach: (1) an increasing decline in the observance of certain traditional forms, and (2) the recognition of conflict between certain sanctioned practices and other more recently acquired prescriptions. The problems of divorce

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Mowrer, *Family Disorganization*, p. 135.

and desertion aptly illustrate the first type. Here an increasing tendency to escape the bonds of matrimony for other reasons than those traditionally recognized gave rise to grave apprehensions on the part of many people. The second type of situation may be illustrated by prostitution, which had widely received social sanction. When it was seen, however, that this practice was contradictory to the growing recognition of the equality between the sexes, prostitution immediately came in for condemnation as a practice based upon the double standard of morals—a standard no longer acceptable to many individuals.

This reform approach, however, has tended to give way more recently to a point of view more thoroughly based upon scientific method, and not fundamentally very different from that of the anthropologists except that the data are taken from the contemporary society of which the researcher is a part rather than from “primitive” peoples. The object of the sociological approach is to determine what are the institutional forms regulating family life in modern society. From this point of view the folk ways and the mores regulating family relations are quite as significant as the legal prescriptions, if not more so. The purpose of this approach is to describe all the cultural forms related to family relations and to explain the likenesses and differences in these common practices. Explanation consists chiefly in showing the connections between other elements in the institutional framework of society, in relating the observations to a theory of social functions, or in correlating the observations with some theory of human nature.

While it is possible to differentiate between what may be called the reform and the cultural approaches, in practice there has often been an intermingling of the two. This is

especially true of those studies of the family which have been concerned with such problems as housing, standards of living, and other economic problems related to the family.<sup>1</sup> These studies, often referred to as studies in the economics of the family, are partial in their outlook and have, as Burgess points out,<sup>2</sup> been carried on in detachment from research in other phases of family life.

There has been as yet no comprehensive study of the modern family in America, either from the institutional point of view or from any other.<sup>3</sup> As far as the organization of the family is concerned, however, the institutional aspects have received more consideration than any others. Several attempts, in fact, have been made to survey the field of which, in some respects at least, that of Reed has been the most successful.<sup>4</sup> A cursory examination of Miss Reed's treatment, however, reveals its sketchiness.

After a short survey of the evolution of the family in the United States, Miss Reed begins her description of the contemporary family by a consideration of marriage. She is concerned with the effect such factors as urbanization, sex, nativity, and education have upon the institution of marriage. The next phase of family life which comes in for consideration is the family unit. Size, control of conception,

<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., such studies as Comish, *The Standard of Living*; Andrews, *Economics of the Household: Its Administration and Finance*; Douglas, *Wages and the Family*; Talbot and Breckinridge, *The Modern Household*.

<sup>2</sup> "Topical Summaries of Current Literature: The Family," *Amer. Jour. Soc.*, XXXII (July, 1926), 107.

<sup>3</sup> There is, however, a suggestive treatment by Groves in his section of the book written in collaboration with Ogburn, *American Marriage and Family Relationships*. Part I, "Modern Marriage and Family Relationships," presents a point of view and facts concerning certain phases of family life which might be expanded into a more extensive and comprehensive treatment.

<sup>4</sup> *The Modern Family*.



incentives to the career of motherhood, and wages are treated as constituting the chief factors in determining the essential character of the family unit.

Further chapters deal with the position of woman as affected by marriage, the causes and effects of failure to marry, the position and care of the child in the family. In considering the effect of marriage upon the position of women the chief points are the legal status of women, the rôle of the mores in restricting the interests and activities of married women, and the handicaps imposed upon women who work. In her analysis of the conditions detrimental to marriage and the effects of failure to marry, Miss Reed discusses the factors of criminality, health, insanity, college education, and the increase in business, professional, and trade opportunities open to women. Her chapter on the child emphasizes the rôle of the child in middle-class families, the status of parental education, the change in maternal attitude, causes of infant mortality, and the care of dependent children.

Ogburn has approached the study of the family from much the same angle as has Miss Reed.<sup>1</sup> He has, however, restricted his analysis to a group of questions related to marriage. His approach, furthermore, is restricted to the statistical. The questions he has sought to answer with reference to marriage are: Is marriage a desirable state? What is the extent of marriage? How often is marriage broken by divorce? Why do couples get divorces? What are the sex differences with regard to marriage? At what ages do individuals marry? What are the racial differences as to marriage? Is the status of marriage different in different parts of the United States? Is marriage diminishing? What is the

<sup>1</sup> Groves and Ogburn, *op. cit.*, Part II.

influence of city life on marriage? What other factors affect marriage?

Nowhere, however, is there in the literature on the modern American family as satisfactory description of the sanctioned forms of family relations as is to be found in Thomas and Znaniecki, *The Polish Peasant*. Here the Polish family organization is portrayed in terms of a wide variety of norms which control and determine the relations between husband and wife, the familial assistance given the young married couple, the relation of parents to children, the relation between brothers and sisters.<sup>1</sup> The social sanctions surrounding marriage are also described in some detail.<sup>2</sup> The result is to portray not only a set of common practices, but to show how these practices are related to a set of sanctioned forms.

This transition from the analysis of the more conventional aspects of family life as didactic units to a description of a set of integrated relationships having social sanction as represented by the study of the Polish Peasant was foreshadowed by the second part of Bosanquet's *The Family*.<sup>3</sup> Here the author is concerned with the basis of the modern family in England, the rôles of the various members, viz., the husband, the wife, the children, and the place which the family name and the home hold in the organization of the family. In discussing the basis of the modern family Bosanquet emphasizes particularly the transition from the family estate as a force making for the preservation and continuity of the family to the influence of the occupation.

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.* (rev. ed.), I, 87-98.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 106-28.

<sup>3</sup> In particular, chaps. viii, ix, xi, xii, xiii, and xiv. In chap. x Bosanquet swings more radically into an analysis in terms of interaction, though there are evidences of this departure in many of the other chapters in Part II.

While the authority of the husband has declined, according to Bosanquet, he still continues as the recognized head of the family as far as the community is concerned.<sup>1</sup> The wife, on the other hand, functions as the center around which all the family activities are organized.<sup>2</sup> The child's rôle is that of a unique personality in which the attention and interest of the family are centered.<sup>3</sup> The name serves as a symbol of family unity as well as does the house, proclaiming to the community the exclusiveness and limitations of the family.<sup>4</sup>

In her discussion of the psychology of family life Bosanquet has laid the ground-work for analysis of the family in terms of the interaction between its members.<sup>5</sup> In this way her book marks the transition from the analysis of the institutional aspects of the family to the study of the unity which arises out of the interplay of attitudes in family life. She has, in other words, indicated the way in which the study of the family can become a part of a nomothetic social science. Social life, whether in the family or in any other group, is the product of continual interaction between the members of the group. Any approach, therefore, which fails to take into account the ways in which the behavior of a member of the family is determined and controlled by the behavior of other members and in turn conditions and molds their behavior is partial and incomplete. This realization has led, accordingly, to the conception of the family as a unit of interacting personalities. The result has been to give to the study of the family a new outlook and a new set of tools of analysis.

<sup>1</sup> *The Family*, pp. 260 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 279 ff.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 299 ff.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 315 ff.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. x, pp. 241-59.

SUGGESTED READINGS

Bosanquet. *The Family*, chaps. i-vii.

Calhoun. *A Social History of the American Family*.

Flügel. *The Psycho-Analytic Study of the Family*, chaps. xv-xvii.

Goodsell. *The Family as a Social and Educational Institution*, chaps. ii-xii.

Howard. *A History of Matrimonial Institutions*, chaps. iv-xviii.

Reuter and Runner. *The Family*, chaps. iv-vi.

Sumner. *Folkways*, chaps. i, ix, and x.

Thomas and Znaniecki. *The Polish Peasant* (rev. ed.), I, 87-128.

Todd. *The Family as an Educational Agency*.

Westermarck. *The History of Human Marriage*.

## CHAPTER V

### THE FAMILY AS A UNIT OF INTERACTION

The introduction of the idea of interaction into the study of the family is, perhaps, one of the most revolutionary accomplishments of the present century in this field, just as it is in sociology in general. The interaction principle furnishes the basic conception necessary for a mechanistic description and explanation of social phenomena just as it does for physical phenomena. It provides the logical principle necessary for the understanding of the behavior of physical objects, of animals, and of man. Interaction is thus basic in all attempts to find law and order in the apparent chaos of physical changes and social events.<sup>1</sup>

The idea of interaction is, accordingly, the basic principle underlying all science, whether physical or social. It provides the essential conception of the connections between objects, and between events, necessary for any analysis in terms of cause and effect. It is these mechanisms of cause and effect which man utilizes in his attempts by technical devices to control physical nature and even man himself. The idea of interaction, therefore, provides not only the basic principle of each of the sciences, but the unifying principle as well, emphasizing the continuity of all research both in method and in fundamental outlook. The logical principle is the same in all science, though the processes and elements are different.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Park and Burgess, *Introduction to the Science of Sociology*, p. 339.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, p. 341.

Ormond, in his *Foundations of Knowledge*, gives an excellent illustration of the use of the concept, interaction, in the understanding of a simple event in the physical realm.

The notion of interaction is not simple but very complex. The notion involves not simply the idea of bare collision and rebound, but something much more profound, namely, the internal modifiability of the colliding agents. Take for example the simplest possible case, that of one billiard ball striking against another. We say that the impact of one ball against another communicates motion, so that the stricken ball passes from a state of rest to one of motion, while the striking ball has experienced a change of an opposite character. But nothing is explained by this account, for if nothing happens but the communication of motion, why does it not pass through the stricken ball and leave its state unchanged? The phenomenon cannot be of this simple character, but there must be a point somewhere at which the recipient of the impulse gathers itself up, so to speak, into a knot and becomes the subject of the impulse which is thus translated into movement. We have thus movement, impact, impulse, which is translated again into activity, and outwardly the billiard ball changing from a state of rest to one of motion; or in the case of the impelling ball, from a state of motion to one of rest. Now the case of the billiard balls is one of the simpler examples of interaction. We have seen that the problem it supplies is not simple but very complex. The situation is not thinkable at all if we do not suppose the internal modifiability of the agents, and this means that these agents are able somehow to receive internally and to react upon impulses which are communicated externally in the form of motion or activity. The simplest form of interaction involves the supposition, therefore, of internal subject-points or their analogues from which impulsions are received and responded to.<sup>1</sup>

In the social sciences the essential idea of interaction is the reciprocal responsiveness of individuals to one another. Society is conceived as a complex set of relations between individuals in which the behavior of one individual is continually initiated and modified by the behavior of other individuals, whose activities in turn are also initiated and

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 70-72; quoted in Park and Burgess, *op. cit.*, p. 340.

modified by the responses of others. Contact between elements, however, is not by physical impact as in the physical sciences, but through the medium of communication.

The individual personality is thus both the source and the product of social contacts. In response to a complex set of signs and symbols, gestures and language, the individual is propelled to activity, so to speak, and in turn through the same mediums propels other individuals to activity. The whole complex of social responses is but a network of these reciprocal influences. The unity of any group, therefore, consists in the set of reciprocal influences which can be identified with a particular collection of individuals, just as a personality consists of a set of reciprocal influences which can be identified with a particular biological organism, i.e., a single individual.

All communication, however, is not upon the same level. In fact, Park and Burgess have differentiated three levels of communication: (1) through the senses, (2) through emotional expressions, and (3) through symbols.<sup>1</sup> Interaction upon the level of the senses and the emotions may be called the natural forms of communication since they are common to both animals and man. Much of the interaction upon this level is spontaneous, direct, and often unconscious. Interaction on the level of symbols, however, contains much of the indirect, delayed, and covert. It is for this reason that so much of the responses of individuals interacting upon a language level are so difficult to observe. Yet the difficulty of obtaining a comprehensive account of interaction upon the language level is only relatively greater than upon the level of the senses and the emotions, since even there much of the response may be delayed until some future time.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 342.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 362-43.

## INTERACTION IN FAMILY RELATIONS

The earliest indication of any idea of the family as a unit of interaction is to be found in Bosanquet's chapter on the psychology of the family.<sup>1</sup> She is concerned primarily, however, with the psychic unity which develops out of interaction between members of the family, giving to each family a set of characteristics which differentiate it from other families and from which the individual cannot wholly escape.

The family type is the theme, of which the individual members are the variations—variations sometimes so changed and complex that only the trained ear can grasp the fundamental theme, and sometimes so broadly simple that every passing listener is caught and smiles to hear the same old tune repeating itself. And however strange and subtle the variations, members of the Family themselves always recognize the theme running below: they are never wholly strange to one another; the chords respond, or echo, or clash, as the case may be.<sup>2</sup>

But while the germ of the idea may be thought to lie in this chapter of Bosanquet's, it was left to Burgess to develop the idea and make it useful to students of the family.<sup>3</sup> Whereas Bosanquet's emphasis is upon the common essential trends in the personalities of each member of the family—the unity of the family consisting of these essential likenesses—Burgess emphasizes the patterns of reciprocal responsiveness between the members of the family as constituting its unity. Likenesses in response are therefore no more important in the unity of the family than are differences, since both are essential elements in interaction. Some of the implications of this conception of the unity of the family Burgess has pointed out:

<sup>1</sup> *The Family*, pp. 241-59.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 249.

<sup>3</sup> "The Family as a Unity of Interacting Personalities," *Family*, VII (March, 1926), 3-9.



.... By a unity of interacting personalities is meant a living, changing, growing thing. I was about to call it a superpersonality. At any rate the actual unity of family life has its existence not in any legal conception, nor in any formal contract, but in the interaction of its members. For the family does not depend for its survival on the harmonious relations of its members, nor does it necessarily disintegrate as a result of conflicts between its members. The family lives as long as interaction is taking place and only dies when it ceases.<sup>1</sup>

Interaction as far as the family is concerned involves, of course, something more than the intercommunication between its members since the family is also in interaction with the groups which make up society. Two aspects of the family as a unit of interaction can, accordingly, be differentiated. The first aspect has already been indicated as consisting of the interplay of personalities rather than purely a common fixation of sexual, parental, and filial instincts. The description of this first aspect of family interaction would, accordingly, be in terms of impulses socially defined as wishes, attitudes, and sentiments.

The second aspect consists of the family as existing in the interaction with the larger society of which the family and its members are component parts. The status of the family in the neighborhood, its rôle as defined in the mores, in public opinion and by law, the changes in the family which result from the play of social forces in the community, are all illustrations of the significance for the family and its members of interaction with society.

The unity of the family in interaction between its members, however, is something more than a mere interstimulation between a collection of individuals. It is in the family that the individual first becomes a person. A person is an individual who has status.<sup>2</sup> The individual becomes aware

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Park and Burgess, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

of his rôle in the family and responds accordingly. But he is also aware of the rôles of each of the other members of the family, as well as of his own rôle in other groups other than the family. The essential organization of the family, therefore, consists of the interrelations between the various rôles of its members.<sup>1</sup>

#### THE DUAL NATURE OF INTERACTION

Interaction in family relations, however, is not a simple process. It is, in fact, a dual process, or a combination of two antagonistic processes. In this respect the process of interaction is not unlike the metabolic process in the human body. The physiologist explains the continual change in the substances of which the human body is made up in terms of two antagonistic processes: anabolism—that process by which the body is built up, e.g., through digestion and assimilation; catabolism—that process by which worn-out materials are discarded, e.g., through expiration and excretion. Some degree of equilibrium is required for maintaining life, which is to say that both operate at the same time and to about the same degree in the healthy individual. Excessive operation of one process in comparison to the other constitutes ill health and may lead to the cessation of all functioning.

Interaction in family relations may be thought of in very much the same way. Here the two processes are organization, i.e., accord, and disorganization, i.e., conflict or discord. The organization of the family consists, therefore, of the relations between the members of the family characterized by identification of attitudes and wishes. The process of organization consists in the building-up of these relations. Conversely, the disorganization of the family con-

<sup>1</sup> Burgess, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

sists of those relations characterized by differentiation of attitudes and wishes. It follows from this that the process of disorganization consists in the breaking-down of attitudes of identification and the building-up of individualized responses.<sup>1</sup>

Two forms of the process of family disorganization may be differentiated in terms of the ways in which the conflict finds expression. On the one hand, there is conflict which is overt and open; while, on the other, it may be incipient and repressed. This differentiation, however, is relative since in every concrete case of domestic discord both types of conflict tend to be present, though not necessarily to the same degree. Those phases of conflict which do not encounter the censoring influence of group taboos tend to find overt expression, whereas those elements which come in conflict with group standards tend to find covert and incipient expression. This explains why sex conflicts in contemporary society tend to find covert and symbolic expression, since these conflicts meet the censoring influence of our taboos upon open discussion of sex relations. Even those persons who profess emancipation from puritanical mores retain the taboo through the mechanism of romanticism by which sex relations are idealized.<sup>2</sup>

Accord also may be either of two types: (1) accommodation, in which the conflict elements are dissipated by a tacit agreement but which with a change in situation may readily

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Mowrer, *Family Disorganization*, pp. 140-43; also *Domestic Discord*, pp. 25-33.

<sup>2</sup> Professor Burgess ("Mimeographed Materials for the Study of the Family") has defined idealization as "the abstraction of an aspect of a situation and reaction to this as representing the complete situation." The romantic attitude toward sex leaves out of account the whole of the sex act in favor of the anticipatory aspects, such as demonstration of affection, solicitude, etc. Cf. Mowrer, *Family Disorganization*, pp. 158-64.

reappear, or (2) it may represent complete identification of interests, at least as far as a particular type of situation is concerned. Again the distinction between these two types is relative since in any concrete case there tends to be accommodation in some realms of interaction and identification in others.

#### THE ACCORD PATTERN

Accommodation in marriage relations, however, is not restricted to one pattern. Again the conceptual contrast provides a device for the analysis of accord patterns. In another place the writer has discussed this subject as follows:

The accord pattern, i.e., those characteristic ways in which husband and wife adjust their attitudes and behavior in accommodation with each other, may take either of two forms: the conventional or habitual, and the romantic or empirical. Where the accord pattern is of the first type, relationships tend to become defined either in terms of conventional standards or patterns, or as habitual variations from these conventional patterns. In the course of time these patterns of relationship tend to become so rigidly fixed that they do not change even in situations in which little of the original elements are present.

The second, or romantic, pattern is that in which there tends to be a constant flux in relationships, a continual adjustment to the changing situations to which the couple is subjected. In concrete cases, of course, this type is seldom, if ever, found in its pure form, but more often intertwined with the first form or pattern. Neither in the present age in America is the first pattern, the conventional, to be found in its pure form very often, though past generations were much more familiar with it. Yet all marriages tend to take on many routine and habitual forms of relationship, especially as expressed in overt behavior. It is for this reason that marriages often come to the breaking-point without even being recognized by the most intimate acquaintances. In fact it is not unusual for married couples themselves to be confronted suddenly with a break without having before recognized that their attitudes toward each other have changed, because of the tendency for overt adjustment patterns to continue to function in new situations. . . .<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Domestic Discord*, pp. 28-29.

Accord in family relations thus tends to fluctuate between the two extremes, the conventional and the romantic. Some families show a predominance of the romantic as over against the conventional, whereas in others the opposite is true. Furthermore, romantic accommodations in one realm may give way in time to conventional. While the reverse is possible it is rarely experienced except as an adjustment to crises in family relations, or in response to serious upheaval in the social fabric of which the family pattern is a part.

#### THE FAMILY ORGANIZATION

Speaking of the organization of the family in terms of the patterning of responses, rather than as a process, it is quite apparent from what has already been said that for any particular time the conflict elements are quite as important in the unity of the family as are the accord elements. Differences, as well as likenesses, become unifying elements so long as the conflict which arises is controlled in the interests of the family group.<sup>1</sup> Both these diverging elements have been made the themes of analyses of the family, but usually not by the same author. Bosanquet, for example, emphasizes the common attributes shared by all members of the family as constituting the essential unity.<sup>2</sup>

. . . . Family intercourse is on a different basis, is of another quality from what it is between members of different Families; the very

<sup>1</sup> This is probably the basis of the common-sense belief that opposites should marry. Like many common-sense observations, however, it is only a half-truth. If the characteristics of each individual can be thought of as belonging to two realms, the family and the community, then it may be said that differences in the community realms of the two individuals may lead to greater interest, and therefore unity, than likenesses. In the family realm, however, differences are likely to provoke disintegrating responses, which, unless compensated for by other highly integrating likenesses, tend toward dissolution of the family unity.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*

language used takes on a shape of its own which may be hardly intelligible outside. Partly, no doubt, its mystery consists in allusions to experiences shared in common, and needing the merest hint to call them to mind, which are a sealed book to the outsider; but partly also it is the outcome of the fact that certain quaintnesses of expression and turns of thought appeal to, or represent, certain fundamental characteristics shared in by all members of the Family. . . . Within the Family . . . thought leaps to meet thought, half a sentence is enough to indicate what we are feeling or thinking; at times indeed we feel ruefully the actual impossibility of concealing our thoughts or feelings. Exaggerations, again, can be indulged in freely, for they will unfailingly be discounted at their true value, or something less; expressions of momentary irritation will not be mistaken for expressions of deep-seated resentment; and a glance of the eye or movement of the hand is enough to guard against misinterpretation.<sup>1</sup>

But in addition to this quickness of comprehension, which according to Bosanquet implies more or less of an intellectual unity, there is that intimate identification which grows out of unity of feeling or emotion. Thus it is unnecessary for one member of the family to give expression of his approval or disapproval in language, for the others already know from more subtle expressions. Again, the members all respond to the same appeals and their sympathies are aroused by the same causes. Failure to share in the family interests marks one as somehow deficient in the virtues of the family, and in the long run family pressure tends to be too strong and causes him to accept as inevitable that in which he previously had not shared. And so in joy or sorrow, in fame or disgrace, that which comes to one of the family is shared by all alike. It is this unity of feeling, therefore, which constitutes the dominant tone of the family and which with intellectual unity constitutes the essential elements in the thing which we call the family.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 254-55.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 255-58.

There are differences, of course, in the processes by which this unity is achieved, as Bosanquet recognizes, depending upon whether one is talking in terms of the relationship between husband and wife, between parent and child, or between brother and sister. Unity is won by husband and wife by conscious steps, whereas brother and sister start unconsciously from that same unity. Children growing up in the family absorb its unity, whereas it has to be achieved by husband and wife.<sup>1</sup>

Flügel, on the other hand, traces the unity of the family to certain primitive impulses in which there is the germ of both conflict and accord.<sup>2</sup> This develops out of the psycho-analytic principle of the ambivalence of the emotions, especially of love and hate. According to the doctrine of ambivalence, two contradictory emotional attitudes toward the same object may exist at the same time or arise alternately without either one necessarily inhibiting the appearance of the other. It is in the equilibrium arising out of this ambivalence, accordingly, that Flügel sees the unifying processes which give rise to the family entity and which constitute its essential character. Thus in summarizing the descriptive portion of his book he says:

We have traced, with such degree of detail as the scope of this book has permitted, the growth within the individual mind of some of the more important of those feelings and tendencies which owe their origin and development to the relations of the individual to the other members of his family. We have seen how these feelings and tendencies are of fundamental importance in the formation of individual character and how they have also exercised a vast influence on social life and social institutions. We have seen also that, throughout their multitudinous transformations and ramifications, the tendencies originally connected

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *op. cit.*, p. 258.

<sup>2</sup> *The Psycho-Analytic Study of the Family.*

with the family preserve some likeness to their primitive character, being ultimately reducible upon analysis to a series of displacements of a very few original trends and impulses. These original impulses fall naturally into two main groups:—those which bind the individual to the family (or to one or more of its members) through a relationship of love, esteem or dependence; and those which are based on a relationship of hate or fear; the trends falling within each of these groups being manifested whether in a direct and positive, or in a reactionary and negative form; the latter being assumed as the result of a conflict between one of the trends in question and some other trend of an opposite, or at any rate a different, character (very often one of the family trends belonging to the opposite group).<sup>1</sup>

The fundamental characteristic of family organization, according to this conception, is conflict between like sexes and accommodation between opposite sexes. Repressions automatically control disintegrating trends in the interest of the satisfaction of love impulses, in turn to create further feelings of tension and conflict. The relationship between husband and wife sets the pattern for the relationships between son and mother, daughter and father. Even the relationship between husband and wife represents a substitute for the earlier relationship between child and parent.<sup>2</sup>

A more adequate conception of family organization, however, would take into account both the philosophical view of Bosanquet and the psychoanalytical view of Flügel and the Freudians. This synthetic view would look upon the family organization as consisting of an equilibrium between common attributes which produce identification and divergent attributes. These divergent attributes produce conflict, it is true, but they also give rise to interest.<sup>3</sup> From this

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 175.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Mowrer, *Family Disorganization*, p. 138.

<sup>3</sup> Interest and attention, according to Dewey, arise in conflict situations. See his "Interpretation of Savage Mind," *Psychological Review*, IX, 217-30.



point of view the essential aspects of family organization may be said to consist of those patterns of relationship by which conflict is controlled and mediated in the interests of the unity of the group. This mediation of difference is, however, never a final product, but is constantly changing in the process of interaction between members of the family.

While it is true that the organization of the family is constantly in flux, there is in every family certain sets of relationship which are relatively permanent. This is to be seen in the relationship between the rôles of the various members of the family. Like the cast of a play, each member of the family has assigned to him as the result of interaction a part to play. Some of the parts are more important than others, but each defines for the individual what his functions are to be with reference to the functions of each of the other members of the cast. So in the family each member assumes a rôle, and this rôle defines his relations with every other member of the family and so constitutes a pattern of accommodation.

#### FAMILY PATTERNS IN MODERN LIFE

Four types of family patterns may be differentiated in contemporary America. These are: (1) the paternal family, (2) the maternal family, (3) the equalitarian family, and (4) the filio-centric family. Of the equalitarian family there are two subtypes: (a) the conventional and (b) the emancipated.<sup>1</sup> Each of these patterns, of course, represents abstractions, many families tending to represent some intermingling of elements. Yet most families tend to represent one type more closely than any other.

The paternal family pattern is characterized by the super-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Mowrer, *Family Disorganization*, pp. 110-113.

ordination of the father and the subordination of the mother and children. This is the family pattern of the proletariat and of the immigrant. Contacts with the community are through the husband and father. It is he who represents the family and is the head of the house. Within the family circle the father stands for discipline whereas the mother stands for affection. The father earns the living and determines the patterns of spending—though much of the actual parceling out of money may be in the hands of the mother, the standards are those of the father. The interests of the wife and mother are confined to the affairs of the home and the care of the children. Paternal families tend to be large and therefore to involve a greater differentiation of rôles. The paternal family pattern is a declining one, owing to the passing of the immigrant and the imitation of middle-class standards on the part of the proletariat.

The assumption of the dominant rôle by the mother characterizes the maternal family. This pattern of family life is particularly characteristic of the commuter of the upper bourgeoisie in the larger cities. Absence of the father from home the greater part of the day causes most of the responsibilities of representing the family to devolve upon the mother. She it is who is the family manager, overseeing and directing all its activities. The development of the "cult of the child" in areas characterized by the maternal pattern, however, stands as a threat to the supremacy of the mother in favor of the child.

The equalitarian family pattern is characterized by the tendency for each member of the family to be on an equal plane with one another. There is in this type of family a minimum of subordination consistent with working out a functioning scheme of family action. Even the child, though

necessarily subordinate while quite young, begins early to assume an equal rôle with its parents. Families tend to be small and activities outside the home absorb much of the time of each of the members.

Among the members of the middle and professional classes the equalitarian family pattern tends to become conventionalized. This is the family pattern of the residential districts, whether in small towns or in large cities. While the interests and activities of the wife and mother are largely outside the home, they are generally not remunerative, but tend to be absorbed in social affairs, in philanthropic activities, and in intellectual and artistic pursuits and the like. Care of children, who tend to be few in number, is largely delegated to nursemaids and governesses. Some attention is given the home as a symbol of the unity of the family and of its status in the community.

In the rooming-house districts of the city, in the kitchenette-apartment areas, and in the residential hotels, the equalitarian family tends to become the "emancipated" type. The emancipated family feels itself freed from the conventions which have been the anathema of feminism. There are no babies to interfere with the freedom of the wife—or if there are, they are not allowed to interfere. Relations with the neighborhood are casual, of the "touch-and-go" type. Primary contacts are upon the basis of common interests rather than upon the basis of geography. Both interests and activities lie chiefly outside the home. Husband and wife may find that they have considerable in common, but if not, the interests of one are not allowed to interfere with those of the other. Both tend to be employed in some gainful occupation or profession. Birth control is

not only a folk way but has got over into the mores for these families.

The filiocentric family pattern is characterized by the predominant rôle of the children in the family, usually of one child. While in some instances interest and attention center around all the children alike, so that they all dominate the family circle, the more characteristic pattern is that in which there is only one child or a favorite who is the central figure in family interaction. All the efforts and activities are determined by the child, either in response to his expressed wishes or as projections of family aspirations into his personality and development. The filiocentric is primarily a middle-class pattern and tends to be found alongside the conventional equalitation family pattern.

While in each family there are certain sets of relationships which are sufficiently permanent to be called patterns, these do not comprise the whole of the family organization. In addition there are those aspects which can more appropriately be described as processes and mechanisms of accord by and in which the organization of the family is developed.

#### SUGGESTED READINGS

Bennett. *Our Women*.

Bosanquet. *The Family*, chaps. v-xv.

Flügel. *The Psycho-Analytic Study of the Family*, chaps. iii.

Groves. *Social Problems of the Family*, chap. xii.

Mowrer. *Domestic Discord*, chap. iii.

Reuter and Runner. *The Family*, chap. vii.

## CHAPTER VI

### MECHANISMS OF ACCORD IN FAMILY RELATIONS

From one point of view the organization of the family consists of that patterning of relations which characterizes a family, without reference to the sequence of time. This phase of family relations has already been called the "family pattern." From another point of view, family organization consists of the adjustment and readjustment of relations, of continual changes in the interpenetration of attitudes, which characterizes the interaction in the family. Family organization may be thought to consist, therefore, of those processes by which harmonious relations are established and re-established between the several members of the family.

The organization of the family consists, then, of those give-and-take processes by which the attitudes of the members of the family become co-ordinated. This co-ordination of attitudes develops out of the realization of common aspirations, mutual interests and ideals. It develops into the identification of attitudes and wishes, the feeling of oneness and of mutual dependency.

But the process of organization is not a simple one. In fact, one may differentiate two types of organizing interaction: (1) accommodation, and (2) assimilation. Accommodation is, as Park and Burgess have said, "the natural issue of conflicts." Conflicts, because they inevitably lead to dissipation of energy and the frustration of wishes in at least one of the parties to the conflict, tend to find solution in

some form of adjustment in which neither individual is the victor, nor the vanquished. Hostile elements find regulation and disappear from overt behavior, though they remain as latent forces to come to the fore again with the slightest change in situation. Accommodation is thus the process by which conflict is eliminated from overt activity in the mutual interests of the persons concerned.<sup>1</sup>

Assimilation, on the other hand, is that process by which the individual acquires the memories, sentiments, and attitudes of another individual, and in doing so shares with him his cultural life. It consists of that interpenetration and fusion of experience which goes on when individuals are intimately associated with each other and, through *rappport*, incorporate in each other's responses the attitudes of the other.<sup>2</sup>

These two types of interaction may be contrasted somewhat as follows: Accommodations are rapid, but transitory, since the conflict is always potentially present. Assimilations are accomplished much more slowly, but are more permanent since conflict disappears. Accommodations may, and often do, indicate revolutionary changes in attitudes whereas in assimilation changes are moderate, though they may actually bulk large over a period of time. Accommodation leads to differentiation of activities as contrasted with the identification of activities in assimilation.<sup>3</sup>

#### PHASES OF FAMILY ORGANIZATION

Three phases of organization may be differentiated in family relations. First, there is the accommodation between the husband and the wife, which tends in time to

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Park and Burgess, *Introduction to the Science of Sociology*, pp. 663-65.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 735-36.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 736.

give way largely to assimilation. Second, there is assimilative interaction between parents and children, which, with increasing contacts on the part of the children outside the home, tends to give way to accommodation. The third phase is that of assimilation between the children in the family, which also tends to give way to accommodation as the children develop outside contacts.

Accommodation between husband and wife, in which the origin of family organization is to be found, begins in modern life prior to marriage. For an analysis of this phase of family organization, therefore, it is necessary to go back to the period of courtship. Marriage is a convenient symbol of the beginning of family life, but it is hardly an accurate one. Much accommodation has occurred prior to the marriage ceremony. Courtship thus constitutes an abbreviated form of trial marriage in which the two persons have an opportunity to try out their facilities for accommodation in a limited sphere of relations.

#### COURTSHIP

Courtship may be defined as that process by which the love object is selected and sufficient accommodation accomplished to permit the initiation of marriage relations. The length of the period of courtship tends to be governed by what a particular group considers to be its function. This function also determines to a large extent the methods by which love objects are selected and the respective rôles of the individuals in the process of courtship.

Courtship is not, of course, an essential preliminary to marriage. History and the anthropological records of savage societies furnish us with many descriptions of practices when married life began without an intervening period of

courtship. In fact, courtship seems to be a comparatively modern practice, growing out of the conviction that the persons themselves have certain mutual interests at stake and should be given an opportunity to discover whether these interests are likely to be realized in a particular mating.

Since modern American courtship practices have their background in the customs of Europe, there is little need to go into the practices of other lands. In fact, selection is so much left in the hands of the young people that it is only necessary to refer to the earlier European practice of family selection as a modifying force. The influence of the tradition of familial selection is, of course, much more to be reckoned with in the case of certain immigrant groups than with reference to the older American stock.

One of the best descriptions of familial selection is to be found in Thomas' and Znaniecki's *The Polish Peasant*. Among this people the familial group directs the choice of marriage partners. This direction on the part of the parents is the logical consequence of the position of the individual in the familial group.

The individual is a match only as a member of the group and owing to the social standing of the family within the community and to the protection and help in social and economic matters given by the family. He has therefore corresponding responsibilities; in marrying he must take, not only his own, but also the family's interests into consideration. These latter interests condition the choice of the partner in three respects:

a) The partner in marriage is an outsider who through marriage becomes a member of the family. The family therefore requires in this individual a personality which will fit easily into the group and be assimilated to the group with as little effort as possible. . . .

b) The candidate for marriage belongs himself to a family, which through marriage will become connected with that of his wife. The



familial group therefore assumes the right to control the choice of its member, not only with regard to the personal qualities of the future partner, but with regard to the nature of the group with which it will be allied. . . .

c) A particular situation is created when widow or widower with children from the first marriage is involved. Here assimilation is very difficult, because no longer an individual, but a part of a strange marriage-group, has to be assimilated. At the same time the connection with the widow's or widower's family will be incomplete, because the family of the first husband or wife also has some claims. Therefore such a marriage is not viewed favorably, and there must be some real social superiority of the future partner and his or her family in order to counterbalance the inferiority caused by the peculiar familial situation. . . .<sup>1</sup>

Since eligible partners are not always to be found among the personal acquaintances of the individual, the practice of arranging marriages through friends and relatives has grown up. Here the starting-point is the friendship with the relatives of the boy or girl. Selection in this way is based upon the assumption that the prospective marriage partner resembles his relatives, and that the family to which these relatives belong are worth making an alliance with.

But since each family tries to make as good a match as possible, and yet it does not wish to lower its own dignity by a refusal or by appearing too eager in accepting at once, there tends to be a long process of advances and withdrawals on both sides. In fact, the greater the range of possibilities open to an individual, the higher the standing of his family. The institution of the professional matchmaker has developed, accordingly, to shorten the ceremonial of choosing, and yet without lowering the dignity of the family. With the matchmaker the young man visits those families which have already been agreed upon by his family as providing

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.* (rev. ed.), I, 108-11.

desirable alliances. He is received by the parents of the girl who inquire into his connections and either encourage him to call on the girl or reject him. The girl, in turn, must select a suitor from among those encouraged by her parents, just as the boy must restrict his choice to those girls who have received the approval of his family.<sup>1</sup>

Familial selection, often referred to as conventional, has had a widespread vogue in European countries. In fact, it is only within the last few decades that individual selection has threatened to supplant the choice of the family group. The result is that choice of mate is much more restricted and controlled by the family in Europe than in America.

But while individual selection has made somewhat greater inroads into the control of the family group in America than in Europe, this does not mean that selection is everywhere wholly in accord with the romantic pattern. The match-maker, it is true, has all but disappeared even among immigrant groups. Yet the control of the family is widespread, though its direction is negative rather than positive. Thus the family taboos certain selections made by the persons themselves because of religious differences, cultural differences, racial differences, etc.

According to the romantic code, selection is wholly a matter for the persons concerned. Family status, social class, and the prejudices which differentiate races and sects are of no moment where romance rules the heart. The romantic ideal of marriage implies freedom of the individual to choose whatever mate he will, unhampered by the authority of the family group, or any other group for that matter. There is, according to the romantic conception, only one criterion upon the basis of which selection is to be made, viz., love.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 109-111.

If the contacts of one individual with another of the opposite sex promise the fulfilment of the demand for love, that promise governs the selection.<sup>1</sup>

Romantic selection is further governed by those characteristic beliefs which constitute the core of the romantic attitude toward marriage. These cardinal beliefs are: "(1) That in marriage will be found the only true happiness, (2) that affinities are ideal love relations, (3) that each may find an ideal mate, (4) that there is only one, and (5) this one will be immediately recognized when met, i.e., through love at first sight."<sup>2</sup>

When romance rules the selection, therefore, the initiation of courtship begins with certain elements of mutual attraction which from the standpoint of the individual are difficult to define. In present-day society the male is supposedly the aggressor and plays the dominant rôle. The female either discourages or encourages the advances of the male and thus her selection is restricted to those males who show interest in her.

Actually, of course, the rôle of the female is not so subordinate as it would seem at first glance or as popular mythology would have it. Social taboos restrain the female from making explicit advances, but she may, and does, use more subtle modes of attracting the attention of the desired mate. The result is that in modern courtship initial advances may be made by either the male or the female, or the beginning of courtship may grow out of mutually encouraging gestures. The only restriction along sex lines which remains is that the male alone is allowed to verbalize

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Mowrer, *Family Disorganization*, pp. 158-65.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 160-61.

his interest in the early stages of courtship and to make the proposal of marriage which follows.<sup>1</sup>

#### CHOICE OF MATE

What are the factors which determine choice when the romantic code is followed, however, is not so apparent. The common-sense answer is, of course, that the individuals "fall in love." But why one falls in love with one person rather than with another finds little or no explanation in common sense. The Freudians, however, have developed a theory to explain the choice which the individual makes.

According to the Freudian view there are two types of love objects open to each individual. Each of these types has been given various names, but there is fairly close agreement as to the nature of each. These two types are: (1) the mother (father in the case of the girl) or dependence type and (2) the narcissistic or comrade type.

The parent image (father to the girl, and mother to the boy) or dependence type is that in which the love object resembles in some way the parent of the individual. This is the form of love which, according to the Freudian view, results in happy marriage. True love is always with a love object of this type. And because of the tendency for incest barriers to arise, one does not fall in love with this type of love object quickly. In fact, it is not uncommon for one to feel a certain amount of irritation in the early stages of development. This is undoubtedly the basis of the common experience of love developing out of a strong dislike, or even hatred.

The second type of love object, which is usually experi-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Groves, *Social Problems of the Family*, pp. 107-10.

enced earlier than the first, is that in which the individual sees himself projected. The love object is a comrade but of a different sex. Love develops suddenly and tends to burn itself out in a short while. This type of love is therefore not generally suitable for marriage and is what is often referred to as infatuation. Love of this sort is not unlike the affection between intimate friends of the same sex. Some differences appear in behavior, however, owing to traditional attitudes toward sex elements.<sup>1</sup>

From the Freudian point of view these two types are irreconcilable. The individual seeks in the dependence type the parental qualities which through early emotional settings never cease to satisfy many of the essential cravings. The roots of the dependence type lie in the instinctive and primordial nature of man. It represents responsibility and the serious side of life. The comrade type, on the other hand, provides stimulation, adventure, and sport. It represents the play side of life with its freedom from responsibility.<sup>2</sup>

There seems to be no fundamental reason why both types of love object may not be represented in a single individual as different phases of his personality. In fact, observation of modern marriage seems to indicate that successful married life is more likely to develop out of situations in which these two aspects are merged in each of the individuals concerned. From time to time, of course, the individual is attracted by one type of love object to the exclusion of the other, though subsequently he may discover the other type in the same person.

Whether the parental image plays the rôle which the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Flügel, *The Psycho-Analytic Study of the Family*, pp. 102-5; Keyserling, *The Book of Marriage*, pp. 274-76.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Keyserling, *op. cit.*, p. 274.

Freudians would have one believe or not, it seems true, nevertheless, that love originates out of discovery of traits which have come to have a high value to the individual in his early life. Thus one is attracted to the love object by seeing in the appearance, the attitudes, and interests of the other individual those qualities which release pleasurable responses. Then there begins an interchange of attitudes and ideas, a seeking after the interests of the other by trial and error. By gesture and verbal response each learns of his successes and failures. But there are borderline cases where doubt lingers in the mind of one as to the meaning of certain responses. This region is the battle ground of love and, in the early part of the process, is the critical region. Insignificant details become here matters of the greatest import. Slowly, however, if love continues this region narrows and both persons feel more at ease when together.

Upon the basis of the discovered traits which satisfy definite cravings in the individual, one builds up an image of the love object according to the pattern of his desires. Features which are not so attractive are disregarded as long as they do not outweigh the desirable traits. This leads to a highly abstracted conception of the love object in which many of the characteristics of the personality represent wish projections. It is this idealization of the love object which has led to the old maxim that "love is blind."

Not only is there an attempt constantly to discover new interests and likes which the two individuals have in common, but there is also constant fear that one has aroused attitudes of antagonism. In the early period of love, therefore, differences are sedulously avoided, for they are likely to overbalance the likenesses. And when such differences arise they seem like floods which threaten to drown the

mutual interests. The tendency is, therefore, to build up ways of avoiding those situations which call out differences in attitudes and so to escape the devastating force of conflict.

Conflict is further regulated and controlled by the tendency to identify one's self with the love object. By the process of identification, traits of the love object—his interests, ambitions, and aspirations—become incorporated into the self-consciousness of the individual. The love object is no longer a person apart from the lover, but has become, in part at least, a projection of a phase of his personality. In this process a number of mechanisms are involved of which the secret and symbolic devices are important.

For lovers to have a secret means not only that they have isolated themselves from other individuals, but also that the isolation produced constitutes a common bond. To have a secret with another is not only to permit him to share exclusively in some phase of one's life, but to express implicit confidence in his integrity. This explains also why so much bitterness tends to follow in the wake of discontinued love affairs. One of the persons cannot but feel that his secrets were obtained under false pretenses.

The rôle of symbolism is also an important one in the process of identification. Through possession of, or contact with, the symbolic representation of the love object the individual incorporates the loved one within himself. Thus to touch the clothes of the loved one often gives great satisfaction. Little trifles that the other has possessed are treasured, e.g., handkerchiefs, locks of hair, etc. No less satisfaction may be obtained by wearing each other's jewelry; witness the wearing of fraternity pins by the coed.

In this way considerable accommodation and identifica-

tion have been accomplished prior to marriage, the amount depending somewhat upon the length of the period of courtship. Marriage, however, generally entails greater intimacy of contact and, if successful, speeds up the processes. The transition from courtship to marriage is, accordingly, a relative matter and represents neither an absolute break in the contacts between the two persons nor a radical change in the essential processes of adjustment.

#### ACCOMMODATION PROCESSES IN MARRIAGE RELATIONS

Much of accommodation in marriage relations tends to take the form of subordination and superordination. In an earlier society the patterns of subordination and superordination in the family were relatively fixed and supported by social sanctions. The husband was superordinate to the wife in almost every phase of marriage relations. In the modern family, however, these patterns tend to be worked out experimentally. It is true, of course, that customary forms still function to varying degrees, but they generally create conflict rather than provide a ready pattern for marriage relations since traditional patterns often do not have the mutual acceptance of both husband and wife.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Much conflict, e.g., often grows out of situations in which the wife works because of the influence of traditional pattern. The husband may have arrived at the position where he recognizes the virtue of equality from the standpoint of doing the sort of thing one wishes to do irrespective of sex. He may find the additional income of his wife a convenience. He may even find considerable source of satisfaction out of her accomplishments. But he may fail to recognize the "defense" element in the attitudes of the wives of his friends who do not work and who give every indication that they feel his wife is forced to work to supplement his income. Furthermore, he tends to find employment outside the home desirable only as long as the status of his wife does not equal his own as represented by salary. In addition, he still tends to feel that certain functions in connection with maintaining a home should be borne by his wife since these have traditionally been hers. She, on



Whether or not, however, there are some patterns of subordination and superordination socially inherited, much of adjustment in modern marriage grows out of interaction between the two persons themselves. In this process there is a constant shifting of the position of each individual from that of subordination to superordination and back again.

Each individual's personality is made up of a group of values which may be thought of as arranged in a series, the first value of which is the most precious and the last the least. Both husband and wife learn in a general way the rating of at least the upper end of this series in each other's personality. Then when problems arise calling for family activity the person whose values rate lowest with reference to this particular problem subordinates himself to the leadership or domination of the other. But again this same individual in another situation may find his most precious values involved and so become the leader in the solution of this problem. If the ratings of values which bear upon any specific problem are always different, no difficulty arises in determining who shall play the leading rôle. But if both find values of equal preciousness functioning in the situation, then there is discord.

Closely allied to accommodation in the form of subordination-superordination is that contained in the differentiation of functions. Again modern life reveals considerable shifting from the earlier situation when stereotyped differentiations of functions were assumed with marriage. The result is a tendency for a constant shifting in functions from time to time, and the lack of differentiation with regard to many

the other hand, may feel that, sharing in the earning process, there should also be equal sharing of all other responsibilities.

responsibilities. Differentiations tend, therefore, to be of temporary character and to be determined to a large degree by exigencies of the moment rather than by tradition.

Differentiation of functions in modern marriage, accordingly, tends to grow out of the needs of the situation rather than out of a classification of activities. This may be illustrated with reference to marriages when both husband and wife are employed. Take, for example, the situation in which the hour of going to work is not the same every morning. It may become the function of the person, whether husband or wife, who leaves last to make the bed and take care of the breakfast dishes. The time at which the particular individual is compelled to leave, therefore, determines the division of labor and not the type of labor involved.

This change from the type of labor involved to the exigencies of the situation as the basis of differentiation of functions has been one of the most revolutionary as far as family relations are concerned. It has meant not only the shelving of specialization along traditionally sanctioned lines, but also that each division of labor becomes only a tentative arrangement to be interrupted by any change in the family situation. It is this tentativeness in differentiation of functions which makes of modern marriage a relationship requiring constant readjustment.

And yet an analysis of most marriages will reveal specializations which had their beginnings soon after marriage and continue with little modification. Often this differentiation is little appreciated by the persons themselves, and it tends to give rise to a high degree of dependency. Folsom thus describes a situation of this sort:

At the outset of married life a husband was a little more careless of details than his wife. The wife assumed as part of her duties the re-

sponsibility of checking up on small matters, such as the payment of bills, the noting and remembering of engagements. Little by little the husband, finding these tasks so well taken care of, forgot them more and more, until he became quite dependent upon his wife to jog his memory even upon important matters. It was not a conscious, deliberate dividing up of duties. It was an unconscious, gradual transfer of responsibility which changed the underlying habits and attitudes of both. The wife became more executive, more responsible; the husband increased his efficiency in turning out large blocks of mental work, but became more negligent and dilatory about isolated details.<sup>1</sup>

Another common form of accommodation in marriage relations is that of compromise. In compromise both husband and wife make concessions in the interest of the regulation of conflict. A wife, for example, learns to play golf since her husband is very fond of the game and he, in turn, learns to play bridge and thus to participate in the parties which interest his wife. This form of accommodation is the outgrowth of morale, an attitude or group of attitudes which places the aspirations of the family above those of the individual.

Another and closely related form of accommodation is toleration. Sacrifices made by husband and wife in mutual toleration are of a more immaterial sort than in compromise.<sup>2</sup> In fact, the only sacrifice required is that of permitting behavior which one dislikes to continue without evidence of irritation. It is in the aid of mutual toleration that family taboos develop by which attention to certain forms of behavior are sedulously avoided.

Mutual toleration is also facilitated through idealization in which the individuals forget the conflicts of the past and react toward the marriage situation in terms of only the harmonious elements plus aspirations of identity and unity.

<sup>1</sup> *Social Psychology*, p. 386.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, p. 380.

In this way past conflicts either lose their content or become redefined as trying experiences out of which greater accord developed. Thus the past is glorified and projected into future relations to promote harmony and accord.

Accommodation also often takes the form of mutual redefinition of the situation. Thus situations which would be expected to create conflict due to differences in the past experiences of the two individuals become redefined in such a way as to bring about the disappearance of the conflicting elements. Rationalizations give support to these definitions by facilitating identification of elements that are essentially different. Cultural differences which would be expected to arise out of marriage between a Mormon and a Jew, for example, are prevented by recourse to the accepted Mormon doctrine of Semitic lineage.

#### FACTORS IN ACCOMMODATION

Further analysis of accommodation may be made in terms of the factors involved. This approach differs from the preceding one in its emphasis upon the content of the process rather than upon its form. Analysis of the factors in accommodation is thus complementary to the analysis in terms of form and is based upon the assumption that family relations may be broken up into fields in terms of the fundamental aspects of personality.

Factors in accommodation are, of course, the same as those in disorganization since in any field of family relations either conflict or accord may develop.<sup>1</sup> These factors are: (1) health, (2) economic, (3) response, (4) cultural, and (5) pattern of life. Each represents a group of attitudes involved in family interaction.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. pp. 176 ff.

Health factors in accommodation are those related to the physical traits and the general physical condition of the individual. The rôle of attractive features in courtship is commonplace knowledge. Marriage, however, introduces many changes, since many physical traits previously concealed come into play. Variations from the ideal sought require adjustment which once having been made may, through the mechanism of idealization, function indefinitely as an identifying factor, or due to changes produced by time called for readjustment.

Physique and physical vitality, whether as variations calling for adjustment or as likenesses which serve as a basis for accord, play important parts in family interaction. Situations in which the husband's physical endurance exceeds that of his wife are accommodated to by his lightening of her tasks in return for his wife's admiration of his superior strength. The chivalric attitude furnishes a convenient formula for accommodations in this field of relations. Ill health of the wife often results in similar accommodations. When the husband is relatively deficient in vitality and health, the rôles of the two may be reversed with little change in the essential nature of accommodation. Accommodations to variations in state of health and physical vitality are further facilitated through the functioning of parental attitudes. Thus in some respects the wife may seem more like a daughter, or the husband more like a son. This form of accommodation, however, has its dangers since should it become too strong it may reinstate the incest barrier between parent and child and so produce conflict in sex relations.

Identity of economic standards is seldom complete in any marriage. Yet a rather high degree of accord may result when there is considerable apparent diversity. A man

whose standard of living has been considerably lower than that of his wife before their marriage may take pride in attempting to maintain her standards even though they exceed his own aspirations at the time. This is especially likely when contacts are primary and when his own prestige depends upon his success in doing so. Again, returns in other realms of family relations serve as compensations for the latent conflict in differences in economic standards. This is especially likely when parental attitudes are reinstated. Separate bank accounts and allowances are concrete programs which have found widespread acceptance in modern family life. This type of arrangement is, however, more commonly associated with the unemployment of wives and tends to give way to joint accounts when both work outside the home.

#### RESPONSE AS AN ACCORD FACTOR

Just as the romantic attitude toward marriage has increased the importance of the response factor in family conflict, so it has also enlarged its rôle in accommodation. Yet in no field of marriage relations do conscious elements count for less than in the realm of response interaction. The prevailing reticence toward sex places a premium upon accidental and instinctive adjustments which are as tenacious in their hold once accomplished as they are irrational. Thus much of the tenacity of sexual adjustment results from its tendency to function as a driving force toward accommodation in other realms of interaction.

Sex should not be too narrowly defined, however. In both the male and the female there are primary and secondary erogenous zones, though sex feeling in the female is much more widely diffused than in the male. But here sex is defined by implication wholly in physiological terms. In the experience of the individual the sex impulse be-

comes overlaid with traditional attitudes and with reactions to one's own sexual contacts. All the "love" elements have their origin in sex, but nowhere today do they constitute purely physiological reactions. Especially in the female there is an overlaying of the sex impulse by sentiment, emotional attachments, and the like. One of the most baffling of loyalties is that of a wife to the man with whom she has had all her sex contacts and for whom she has borne children even though he may have deserted her for another woman. Social workers constantly find their attempts to punish deserters frustrated by such an attitude.<sup>1</sup>

It is sex in this composite meaning of sense and sentiment which is at the basis of compatibility in response, and for which Thomas has substituted the term "desire for response."<sup>2</sup> Not only does the strength of the desire for response vary from individual to individual, but also there is considerable diversity in the forms in which the desire tends to seek expression. Accommodation requires, therefore, adjustment between variations of both kinds.

Seldom, if ever, is the desire for response of equal strength in two individuals. In general, this desire is much stronger in women than in men. Whether this is the result of any innate sexual difference or not is difficult to say. Certainly it is true that custom and tradition favor the expansion of love interests in women to a higher degree than in men. Furthermore, regardless of whatever may be the differences between the sexes, the romantic movement has placed a higher premium upon accommodation in this field of relations than in any other.

The forms in which the desire for response seeks expres-

<sup>1</sup> Mowrer, *op. cit.*, p. 197.

<sup>2</sup> "The Desire for response," Thomas says, ". . . is primarily related to the instinct of love, and shows itself in the tendency to seek and to give signs of appreciation in connection with other individuals."—*The Unadjusted Girl*, p. 17.

sion and satisfaction also varies greatly between individuals and between cultures. Accommodation must take into account what the individuals expect in the way not only of direct sexual contacts but of indirect as well, including all those ways conventionally accepted as appropriate for the demonstrations of affection.

Just as differences in the desire for response are outgrowths of the diversity of cultural backgrounds of individuals, so also are differences in cultural attitudes the results of these same variations. These differences are chiefly in the religious, racial, and educational folk ways and mores of the groups in which the two persons grew up. Situations giving rise to differences in conceptions of right or wrong, proper or improper conduct, require accommodation.

Social contacts are made upon the basis of cultural characteristics. But since friends are not always mutually agreeable, adjustment is required to these differences which arise out of diversity of cultural background. Likewise differences in recreational interests and in preferences for leisure-time activities call for accommodation.

The final factor in accommodation is that of the pattern of life. Each individual tends to work out some schematization of his attitudes and wishes. That is to say, all the attitudes and wishes of the individual tend to be related to one another in some sort of stable relationship which gives direction to his activities and results in a consistent evolution from the past to the present. A part of the life-pattern consists of that core of ideals and aspirations which are ordinarily called character. Character is, however, simply a projection of integrated activities into the future as a device for facilitating co-ordination of responses, present and past. The pattern of life is made up of the whole complex of rela-



tions between attitudes and wishes, whether past, present, or future. It refers, in fact, to that consistency and co-ordination of activities which differentiates one individual from another, and without which his approach to the problems of life would be amorphous and without form or character.

It is the life-pattern of the individual, then, which determines the general outlook or bias with which he will approach any problem. The Freudian conceptions of introversion and extroversion indicate the polarity of life-patterns, just as in common sense the same antithesis is described in the terms "subjective" and "objective."

In common sense there are two contradictory points of view with reference to the life-pattern as a determiner of discord or accord in marriage relations. One point of view is expressed in the conviction that the most successful marriages are between two persons who are very similar in "temperament." The other is that some decided differences in "temperament" are advantageous. According to this latter point of view, for example, a serious-minded individual should marry a person who is fond of jokes in order that there may be some relief at critical moments to what would otherwise become a compounding of seriousness.

Neither of the views of common sense, however, is essentially true, since both leave out of account the ambivalent character of human nature, as well as failing to recognize the extent to which accommodation may take the form of the development of the secondary phases of the pattern of life. The introverted husband may find a source of interest in the extroversion of his wife or be irritated by this difference in outlook. Again, common extroversion in both husband and wife may result in greater sympathy and understanding or produce conflict and tension. Just what are the additional

factors which control in each case is not clearly understood, yet it seems likely that they are somehow related to the ambivalent character of human nature.

#### THE FUSION OF FACTORS

Furthermore, the whole question of the rôle of the pattern of life in accommodation is complicated by the fact that other factors enter into the situation to produce accommodation when otherwise it would seem that only conflict could result. But what is true with reference to the pattern of life is true also of each of the other factors. In every concrete marriage situation there tends to be a fusion of factors in the direction of either conflict or accord.

Accommodations in one realm of relations, accordingly, tend to be, under certain conditions, carried over into other realms of relations. Accommodation in response relations, for example, often acts as a solvent of tendencies which would be expected to give rise to tension in economic relations, in cultural relations, in health relations, etc. In fact, there seems to be no bounds to the solvent character of response accommodation. Yet it is just as true, though perhaps not so frequently, that accommodation in other realms facilitates accommodation in response relations. The direction of "contagion" seems to be determined largely by the relative importance of the various interests in the personalities of the two individuals. Furthermore, the predominance of response in so many cases seems to arise out of the fact that these interests are highly emotional and socially tabooed except in disguised form and therefore less amenable to conscious control than some of the other interests.

All accommodations, however, are of tentative character, as has already been pointed out. Yet in time, unless over-

balanced by discord elements, accommodation tends to give way largely to assimilation in which by interpenetration and fusion the two personalities become duplicates of each other. This has long been recognized in the common-sense observation that couples who have lived together for a long time come to look alike. What is probably more true is that they act alike. It is a close resemblance of mannerisms and of tastes which they have in common rather than any decided similarity in physical appearance. But again knowledge of this phase of family relations is fragmentary. Why accommodation gives way to assimilation in some cases and not in others is still an unsolved problem awaiting the research genius of the future.

Adjustment between husband and wife is not, of course, the only field of interaction in the family, unless there are no children. What have aptly been called parent-child relationships also constitute a phase of the organization of the family. Then there are the relations between the children themselves, unless there is only one child. It is customary, however, to combine these two phases by approaching the analysis of interaction in terms of the development of personality.

#### SUGGESTED READINGS

Flügel. *The Psycho-Analytic Study of the Family*, chaps. x and xi.

Folsom. *Social Psychology*, chap. viii.

Groves. *Social Problems of the Family*, chap. vii.

Park and Burgess. *Introduction to the Science of Sociology*, chap. x.

Popenoe. *Modern Marriage*, chaps. iii, iv, and v.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE FAMILY AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONALITY

Man, unlike the animals, lives in two worlds made up of widely divergent sets of relations, the primary and the secondary. He is, therefore, a creature of contrasts living in a world of paradoxes. With reference to the things which belong to the primary world his attitudes are highly emotional and directed toward the realization of supreme values. His attitudes toward the things in the secondary world, however, are highly rational and directed toward the realization of mediate and pragmatic values.

This contrast in social worlds is ever present in the attempts of man to find solutions to his problems. The religious and the scientific, the sacred and the secular, the holy and the profane, the spiritual and the material, the emotional and the rational, the personal and the impersonal, the subjective and the objective—all express this antithesis in the experiences of man. Much of his efforts, therefore, are consumed in attempting to bring these two worlds into harmony with each other.

The history of civilization may be thought of, accordingly, as a panorama of conflict between the primary and the secondary. In this conflict the horizon of the secondary has continually widened and the primary has narrowed. Primitive man lived in a world in which the primary constituted almost the whole of his existence; modern man has succeeded in enlarging the realm of the secondary to what even to him seem astounding proportions.

Professor Mead has expressed this contrast between the primary and the secondary in terms of the objects to which man adjusts. In so far as one's responses to his environment are in terms of responding objects, his acts are highly tentative and experimental. These objects are therefore social since one responds to them as if they in turn were responding to him. With physical objects, however, the situation is quite different. What differentiates the physical from the social object is the fact that one's responses are definite and conclusive. In responding to physical objects, accordingly, one finds a telescoping of the act, since there is no intervening change in meaning between the beginning and the end of the act. This is to say that the individual adjusts to physical objects as if these objects in turn were fixed and permanent and in no way responded to him. The development of science can be thought of, accordingly, as the redefinition of social objects into physical objects, or the transfer of adjustment from the primary to the secondary world.

#### THE DUAL NATURE OF SOCIETY

The counterpart of the inevitable antithesis in the attitudes of man is to be found in the groups to which he belongs. Those groups into which man is born, such as the family and the kinship groups, belong to the primary. In these groups membership is determined by the principle of social heredity. Those groups, on the other hand, to which admission is governed by the interest principle constitute the secondary world. Occupational, professional, and class groups of all sorts fall into this category. These are the groups in which man seeks new experience and recognition

as over against response and security which find their realization in the primary groups.<sup>1</sup>

Of all the primary groups the family is, of course, the most primary. It is in the family in which the individual becomes a person. In the family the child first comes to look upon himself as over against other selves. Thus he becomes conscious of the fact that he has a rôle to play on the stage of life. He is no longer merely an individual organism, but the member of a group. His behavior becomes consistent and meaningful in terms of his rôle. His responses are no longer regulated by simple organic needs, but take into account the reactions of others about him. He has, in other words, acquired character and personality.

Just as the hearth symbolizes the family and in turn all the primary groups, so the market place symbolizes the secondary realm. In the family, status, once defined, remains relatively fixed. In the secondary realm, however, the status of the individual is ever threatened. Freedom and independent action, therefore, have their origin and flourish in

<sup>1</sup> Thomas has defined these fundamental wishes as follows: "The desire for new experience is . . . emotionally related to anger, which tends to invite death, and expresses itself in courage, advance, attack, pursuit. The desire for new experience implies, therefore, motion, change, danger, instability, social irresponsibility. . . . The desire for security, on the other hand, is based on fear, which tends to avoid death and expresses itself in timidity, avoidance, and flight. The individual dominated by it is cautious, conservative, and apprehensive, tending also to regular habits, systematic work, and the accumulation of property. . . . The desire for response . . . is primarily related to the instinct of love, and shows itself in the tendency to seek and to give signs of appreciation in connection with other individuals. . . . The desire for recognition . . . is expressed in the general struggle of men for position in their social group, in devices for securing a recognized, enviable, and advantageous social status."—*The Unadjusted Girl*, pp. 4 ff.

the secondary groups. The most fundamental problems of life for the individual consist, accordingly, in adjusting his rôle as defined in the primary groups, especially the family, to the needs and demands of the secondary groups. How ably he makes this adjustment depends to a large degree upon the techniques he has developed in the family.<sup>1</sup>

#### THE RÔLE OF THE CHILD IN THE FAMILY

The rôle of the child in an older society was determined largely by custom and tradition. Two elements in particular determined the child's rôle both in the family and in the community. In the first place, the child "inherited" the status of the family. He was to the manner born. His station was defined for him by the court of custom from which there was no appeal. Whether that station was high or low in the estimation of the community, traditional attitudes of pride and self-respect made conformance to the standards of one's class seem the only thing worth while. The individual who failed to live up to the standards of his station, or who aspired to rise above his group, was condemned by his fellows.

<sup>1</sup> The distinction between primary and secondary groups in this discussion is not strictly in accord with that often accepted by sociologists along the lines of Cooley's definition of the primary group as one of face-to-face contacts. In fact, the terms "familial" and "communal" would probably express the differentiation more appropriately were it not for the unfortunate connotations of these terms. "Familial" has been rejected because the term suggests restriction to the *small* family group, whereas what is needed is a term including the wider range of the *large* family. "Communal," on the other hand, is often interpreted as indicating common sharing on the part of all members of the local community and thus related to communism, whereas what the writer wishes to express is that belonging to the community at large and including all those groups outside the circle of the family and of kin.

The second element of importance in determining the rôle of the child was the principle of primogeniture by which the order of birth functioned as a determining force. Thus the rôle of the child was mapped out for him even before birth by a set of customs and practices. If he chanced to be the first born, his rôle was different than if he had been second born, or third born, and so on. If he were male, that, too, "cast" him for a different rôle than if he had been female.

In modern society, however, much of the influence of family status, of primogeniture, and of sex tend to give way to, or be modified by, a multitude of other factors operating during the development of the child, rather than superimposed upon him by social customs and traditions. The individual works out his rôle, or has it imposed upon him, in family interaction upon the basis of elements in the immediate situation, rather than in terms of traditional patterns. Yet family interaction may, and often does, have in it vestiges of practices which are no longer universally accepted.

Order of birth, for example, long the imperious determiner of rôle, still singles out in many instances the first-born male as the successor to the father's realized or desired occupation. Should the first-born chance to be a girl, even she, in an era of changing fashions in feminine employment, may not escape the rôle which ordinarily falls to the first-born male. The youngest child also falls heir to a rather clearly defined rôle in modern society. Regardless of sex, he tends to be catered to much more than any of the other children. His is a superordinate position in the family circle with every member his vassal. His derelictions are excused upon the ground that he is young and does not know better. Opportunities denied the other children are his because the family is better able to afford them.



Should the child be an only child, his rôle represents a fusion of what ordinarily would be those of the first-born and of the last-born. The rôle of the only child tends thus to be a dual rôle in which all the family aspirations are projected upon him and yet at the same time he is encouraged to prolong his childhood, and thereby postpone the realization of these aspirations. He is at once the budding genius from whom great things are expected and the infant whose derelictions are excused with good-natured tolerance.

The rôle of the in-between child, on the other hand, is ordinarily quite different. In the domestic drama his tends to be an inferior rôle. The in-between child belongs to the "supporting cast." His lot is to follow the leadership of the first-born and to cater to the last-born. The in-between child is not expected to excel, and should he do so, credit is grudgingly given. If sacrifices are required in favor of one child as over against another, the in-between child generally is expected to make them. And yet there are indications that in later life the in-between child exceeds the youngest in accomplishments.<sup>1</sup>

Family status and sex also continue to function in determining the rôle of the child. Conduct tolerated in others is defined as beneath the dignity of a member of the "Van Horn" family. Ambitions and ideals, occupational choices, and educational accomplishments must fall within the range defined by the status of the family. Sex, while it no longer constitutes an impregnable barrier between two sets of rôles, continues to make the status of the boy in the family different from that of the girl. Boys are not only allowed more

<sup>1</sup> Professor Ogburn, in a study of persons whose names appear in *Who's Who in America*, found that the first-born appears most frequently and the youngest the least frequently.

privileges than girls, such as less restriction on choice of friends, irregular hours, etc., but they may participate in more vigorous sports and give less attention to their physical appearance.

The influence of order of birth, sex and family status, however, are supplemented by a variety of factors. The more important of these seem to be physical traits, mental characteristics, family circumstances at birth, and eventually the individual's conception of his rôle.

Physical traits determine the attitudes of the parents toward the child in many ways and so define his rôle in the family. An attractive child, obviously, gets more attention than one who is unattractive. There are many other physical features, however, which do not have any such universal appeal but nevertheless are quite as important because of their relations to emotional complexes. The child who looks like the favorite grandparent, for example, finds himself the inheritor of that rôle. This is true, of course, whether the attitudes of the parents toward their own parents were those of affection or hostility. Physical resemblances to other members of the larger family also tend to define the rôle of the child in terms of the attitudes of the parents toward those persons. Even resemblances to the traits of a child who has died produce an identification with that child and so a carrying-over of his rôle to the living.

Mental traits, through identification with those of other members of the larger family, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins, often define the rôle of the child in much the same way in which do physical resemblances. But perhaps more important are those things which suggest to the parents the possession of either superior or inferior ability. If the baby walks or talks earlier than most babies, that is

taken to indicate potentialities of genius. If, on the other hand, his development is in any way retarded, he tends to be looked upon as a stupid child. The result in either case is usually that the child grows up constantly reminded of these early indications of ability or deficiency, and his rôle is thereby defined for him.

Certain family circumstances, either at the time of birth or shortly following, often have pronounced effects upon the rôle of the child. Desire for a child of the opposite sex may color the attitudes of at least one parent toward the new member of the family. In a patrilinear society like that in America where males are desired to carry on the family name, the birth of a girl is often a disappointment to the father. Under such circumstances it is not unusual to find girls trying to play a rôle which would normally fall to a boy. Economic circumstances and the pressure of financial conditions within the family may make the child unwanted. Lack of desire for any more children or for any children at all, often produce a similar effect. Whatever the circumstances, the child feels himself handicapped by conditions over which he has no control.

The child's response to his rôle, once he becomes self-conscious, is not of course in terms of any unified conception on the part of the members of the family, or even as seen by an outsider, but instead in terms of his own conception as defined by the attitudes of those about him. He sees himself in the mirrored attitudes of the members of his family and responds in terms of what he conceives to be expected of him. As he comes more and more in contact with others outside the family group he may find that his conception of his rôle becomes modified. This modified conception he carries back to the family, and this tends in turn to modify his

rôle in the family, though not necessarily in the same direction. Thus community experiences enter into the definition of the rôle in the family, though handicapped by the emotional entrenchment of family attitudes.

#### FAMILY RÔLE AS THE INTEGRATIVE MECHANISM

It is in family interaction, then, that the child gets a conception of his rôle. This rôle is defined for him by the attitudes of the family toward him. Sometimes the attitudes of the members of the family are fluctuating and ambiguous, in which case the child's rôle is a precarious one. In other instances family interaction leaves no doubt as to what rôle the child is expected to play. Again, communal attitudes may define the rôle of the child somewhat at variance with the definition of the family. In these instances, should the child attempt to carry over in the family these secondary attitudes, his rôle tends to be modified somewhat in the direction of either acceptance or rejection of the secondary elements. Whatever may be the modifying factors, however, the rôle in the family functions as the major integrative mechanism in the development of the child's personality.

The rôle of the child in the family serves, accordingly, as an integrative mechanism by setting a pattern for the coordination of attitudes and wishes. Integration is, of course, a relative thing. Some personalities are much more highly integrated than others. Yet every individual who is able to make some sort of workable adjustment to his environment must have worked out some sort of consistency between his responses for the time being, and even from time to time.

The earliest integration is, of course, in the motor field. Here the muscular activities of the child become so coordinated that he can manipulate the environment in such

a way as to satisfy his organic needs. The child works out, therefore, largely by a trial-and-error process, some sort of integration by which he responds not as a series of disconnected reaction patterns, but as a unified organism. This integration is, obviously, determined by universal elements in life-situations, and has as its driving force the inherited tendencies and needs of the organism.

Early muscular co-ordination is concerned, however, only with the realization of immediate ends and with original responses to the natural environment. In modern society, almost from the day of birth, the child is subjected to a regimen of training designed to equip him for participation in communal life. By the time he is five or six years old the dominant trends in his personality have become quite clearly defined in response to his rôle in the family. It is these sets or trends which constitute the dominant patterns of integration and the co-ordinating mechanism in the development of personality.

The definition of the rôle of the child in the family thus gives direction and meaning to all life-activities. It provides not only the basic pattern for the adjustment to the non-moral demands of life, but also that core of values which transforms much of behavior into conduct.

#### THE PRIMARY RÔLE

Since this basic core of the personality, defined by the rôle of the child in the family, constitutes the dominant trend in his personality, it may be called the primary rôle. It constitutes the basic pattern which gives direction and character to the individual's responses to his life-problems. It performs a synthesizing function, giving consistency and unity to all the attitudes of the individual, by furnishing a guide to the

selection of responses. This rôle has been variously designated, ranging from the common-sense term "conscience" to the Freudian concept, the "censor."

The common-sense conception of conscience is misleading since it assumes that each individual has within him some universal faculty of judging right from wrong. Actually the judgments of right and wrong have grown up empirically and vary from culture to culture. The child simply takes over those standards of conduct current in the group as interpreted to him by his family. Since these standards of judgment are acquired during that period of life in which the individual is most impressionable, and since they are likewise identified with attitudes of affection toward the parents, any conduct not in harmony with the primary rôle gives rise to what are often called "pangs of conscience."

In somewhat the same way the Freudian conception of the censor is also fallacious. According to this conception, the censor represents the repressive control of society. The censor has its origin in sphincter training in which the child is taught by its parents to control his eliminative functions. Social control over the instinctive urges and impulses of the individual are further elaborated in the form of taboos relating to a wide variety of responses. These become incorporated into the personality of the individual and demand that the instinctive impulses find socially sanctioned outlets, i.e., satisfactions in such form as will not call out the repressive activity of the censor. The whole conception is thus built upon the assumption of inevitable conflict between man's inherited nature and the demands of society.

A more realistic interpretation of the censor is to be found in the controlling influence of the primary rôle. As the individual's activities reach out into the community, he finds

behavior at variance to that which would receive the sanction of his family. He is faced, therefore, with two contradictory courses of action, one of which has the sanction of the group in which he happens to find himself, and the other having the sanction of the family group. If the family rôle is sufficiently entrenched, it acts as the censor and prevents behavior contrary to that rôle. On the other hand, the individual may go contrary to the dictates of the family rôle, in which case he often feels a lowering of self-esteem, again a phase of censorship.

#### THE AMBIGUOUS PRIMARY RÔLE

While the rôle of the child in the family tends to be clearly defined at any one time, there may be, and often is, some uncertainty from time to time. Consistency and unity of rôle in the family are, accordingly, relative matters. For one thing, there is considerable difference between families. In one family the rôles of all the children may be highly consistent throughout the whole of its existence as a closely knit group. In another family, however, the rôles of the various children may shift from time to time. Again, in some families the rôles of certain children may show a high degree of consistency as against considerable ambiguity in those of other children.

Some of the most important factors in making for ambiguity in the family rôles of children are: (1) changes in family status, (2) birth of other children, (3) interruption of family life, and (4) the differential attitudes of the parents. Each of these, separately or in combination with others, tends to interfere with what may be called the normal tendency toward consistency in the primary rôle.

Since the attitudes of the parents toward the child are de-

terminated to some extent by their hopes and aspirations for his rôle in the community, changes in the status of the family itself, if radical, are reflected in the parental conception of the child's rôle. Though such changes do not lead to change in the position of the child within the family circle, they tend to open or close doors to opportunities and potential developments which make up the content of the child's rôle.

Birth of other children often produces profound changes upon the rôle of the child in the family. Since the last-born child tends to be the center of attention, the appearance of another child to take over the coveted position always requires considerable readaptation in the rôle of the child affected. If the interval between births is short, the adjustment is not necessarily a radical one; but should it be long, the child who has thus been deprived of his "birthright," so to speak, experiences considerable conflict between the earlier and the later rôles.

Interruptions of family life tend also to interfere with the unity of the child's rôle in the family. Desertion, divorce, separation, or death of parents, leading as they often do to placement of children, introduce precarious elements into the rôle of the child even though the home is re-established. Should the rôle of the child be continued without change once the life of the family group is re-established, memory of changed status during the interruption, if continued over any length of time, causes the child to doubt if his position in the family is what it seems to be. Acquisition of a step-parent, or step-siblings, also may radically change the rôle of the child.

Again, the differences in the attitudes of the parents toward the child add ambiguity to his rôle. Especially is this



true if there is considerable variance in the attitudes of one parent in comparison with those of the other. The child's conceptions of himself tend under these circumstances to combine two contradictory elements or trends and so create constant tension within his personality.

In spite of these ambiguities, however, the rôle of the child in the family tends to conform to certain rather definitely defined patterns. These patterns, in turn, tend to determine to a large extent the type of personality which he will become as an adult.

#### TYPES OF PERSONALITIES

Personality may be defined in terms of the part one plays in the group. From this point of view the personality of an individual is made up of those traits and their interrelations which determine the rôle of the individual in his social group.<sup>1</sup> But, obviously, an individual belongs not to one group, but to many groups. The result is that each adult individual is not one personality, but a group of personalities or selves. The individual has as many selves as there are groups to which he belongs.<sup>2</sup> Yet, while there are these differences, which in some instances become so clearly differentiated as to become pathological, there are also likenesses between the different selves. In fact, the normal tendency is toward sufficient unity to provide at least a working equilibrium in terms of which personalities may be classified.

For purposes of analysis the personality may be thought

<sup>1</sup> See Park and Burgess, *Introduction to the Science of Sociology*, pp. 69-71, for a discussion of personality from this point of view. Their classification of traits which determine the rôle of the individual in the group is as follows: (a) physical traits, (b) temperament, (c) character, (d) social expression, (e) prestige, and (f) the individual's conception of his rôle.

<sup>2</sup> See Vincent, "The Rivalry of Social Groups," *Amer. Jour. Soc.*, Vol. XVI (1910-11), quoted in Park and Burgess, *op. cit.*, p. 609.

of as consisting of two large bodies of experience represented by the two realms in which the individual lives, the primary and the secondary. From the time the child starts to school, he finds these two groups competing for his allegiance. The result is that he builds up two personalities, except to the extent to which he finds the experiences in one group wholly in harmony with those in the other. But since conflict between groups is more common than harmony, duality of attitude is characteristic of all human beings.

To assume that duality of personality is normal, however, is to imply that mental conflict is also the normal experience of most individuals. This conflict is the outgrowth of the presence of contradictory elements in the two dominant trends in personalities represented by the rôle of the individual in the primary groups, especially the family, and his rôle in the secondary groups. But since the primary precedes the secondary, personalities may be classified in terms of the relationship between the primary and the secondary rôles.

In some cases, of course, conflict is reduced to a minimum and tends to disappear. This is especially true when the rôle of the individual in his secondary relations represents a carry-over of the primary rôle, assuming, of course, that the individual was satisfied with the earlier rôle. In these cases the individual played a superordinate rôle in the family, or else there was an alternation between superordination and subordination, and this pattern of accommodation continued in the secondary groups.

This type of personality is perhaps the most common of the so-called adjusted persons. Adjustment is, of course, a relative matter. Nevertheless, a person may be called adjusted when his attitudes show a relatively high degree of consistency and integration. Since the dominant trends in

personality tend to be developed around the rôle of the person in the family and in the community, it follows that if there is little or no difference between the two, the personality of the individual will be highly integrated.<sup>1</sup>

Adult personalities, however, may show considerable adjustment without having carried over the family rôle into the community. In fact, one type of personality achieves considerable stability owing to the fact that the secondary rôle is radically different from the primary rôle. The individual, for example, whose rôle in the family was inferior may, under certain conditions, become the leader in the community. This achievement of status in the community, which is higher than that in the family, results in an adjustment in communal relations which has no counterpart in family relations.

Under what conditions the person whose rôle in the family was inferior becomes the superordinate individual in the community is not entirely clear. Yet some of the circumstances bringing about this change may be indicated. Superior ability, either undeveloped or unrecognized in the family, may come to the front in secondary groups. This is especially true when there is a clear demarcation between primary and secondary contacts as one finds in highly urbanized areas and when there is movement from one community to another.

Positive compensation, in the form of development of the inferior traits or substitute characteristics to take the place

<sup>1</sup> This type of personality corresponds on the whole to what the Freudians call the "normal personality." In the normal personality there is a harmonious working-together of the forces of the Id (original urges), the Ego (modifications of the original urges due to contact with the external world) and the Super-Ego (conscience).—Healy, Bronner, and Bowers, *The Structure and Meaning of Psychoanalysis*, p. 298.

of the inferior, often result in higher status in the community than in the family. Sometimes the individual assumes a superior rôle in crisis situations much to his own surprise, but once having taken the rôle, fosters it until he becomes habituated. Thus his freedom from the family rôle is largely accidental, though based upon potentialities not previously realized.

Unless, however, this altered status finds confirmation in the primary groups, there tends to be considerable feeling of inferiority which prevents as high a degree of integration as is to be found in the first type. The individual feels his secondary rôle precarious and tends to be haunted with the fear that the primary group was right after all. This fear may become so strong as to stand as a constant threat to the continuance of the superior secondary rôle.<sup>1</sup>

#### UNADJUSTED PERSONALITIES

Carrying over the family rôle into the community is no guaranty, however, that the individual will be adjusted. The child whose position in the family is one of subordination, for example, may have inferior status in the community. In some instances, of course, this situation is accepted and the individual becomes highly adjusted to an inferior rôle, both primary and secondary. More often, perhaps, he becomes highly unadjusted, owing to negativistic reactions to his family rôle and therefore to his position in the community.

Negativistic reactions to the primary rôle seem to grow out of reflective comparison between the treatment accorded one child as compared with another. The child whose par-

<sup>1</sup> The inhibited personality of the Freudians corresponds most closely to this second type of personality, especially in those instances in which the feeling of inferiority is particularly strong. See *ibid.*, pp. 300-303.

ents give him little or no attention sees and admires that showered upon the favorite. If he himself once occupied the center of the stage, attitudes of rebellion immediately crop out. If, however, he has never experienced any other treatment, he may for a time fall in line and give to the favorite the same solicitude which he observes in the parental attitude. Through contacts with other children in school and on the playground, however, he tends to become conscious of the fact that inferior status is not a thing to be accepted as inevitable. Often this feeling of undeserved inferiority is strengthened by some preferential treatment outside the family. Individuals in such situations thus become highly disorganized in spite of the fact that the primary and secondary rôles are almost identical.<sup>1</sup>

The fourth type of personality is that in which the individual fails to carry over into the secondary group his superior status in the family. The result is constant conflict between the primary and secondary rôles. In the family the status of the individual is superordinate and secure. In the community, on the other hand, his status is either subordinate all the time, or much of the time. In so far as these individuals are able to retain their family rôles, this achievement is precarious.

<sup>1</sup> This type of personality is partially represented in the Freudian scheme by the neurotic personality. Since there are, however, other escape mechanisms than illness, the Freudian type is much more restricted than the type described in this treatment. Drunkenness, the use of narcotics, and aggressiveness often represent rebellion against an inferior rôle. Lying and stealing are likewise commonly used devices. In fact, as far as the response of the individual is concerned, this type has much in common with that in which the individual's adjustment grows out of playing a communal rôle which was repressed in the family, with the exception that the person's attempts do not receive special recognition. For a description of the Freudian conception of the neurotic personality, see Healy, Bronner and Bowers, *op. cit.*, pp. 304-7.

This type of personality, therefore, builds up a host of defense mechanisms. He may develop paranoid trends or turn to antisocial behavior. Fantasy and reverie play a large part in the lives of many persons of this type. Rationalizations assist to conceal the conflict between the two rôles. But always this type is marked by the persistent drive to re-enact the primary rôle in secondary and community contacts, unless dissociation is hit upon as a mechanism of avoiding conflict.

These four types of personalities represent, then, the fundamental ways in which the primary rôle influences the development of personality. It is true, of course, that there is seldom the clear definition of rôle in the family which is assumed in the foregoing analysis. What more often happens is that there is more or less ambiguity in the primary rôle. This complexity often grows out of the fact that a particular individual is not treated in exactly the same way by all the other members of the family. There may be, and often is, for example, differentials between the attitudes of the two parents. Brothers and sisters, also are not necessarily in complete agreement. Yet while this indicates a greater complexity than the preceding analysis would imply, it does not alter the essential duality of social relations. The four fundamental patterns seem to hold, therefore, even though there are a wide variety of subpatterns within each of these major types.

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**PART III**  
**DISORGANIZATION OF THE FAMILY**





## CHAPTER VIII

### DISINTEGRATION OF THE MODERN FAMILY

Modern interest in the family has been concerned chiefly with its disorganization rather than with its organization. Until very recently it was only when the family began to disintegrate that it became the subject for discussion. Other aspects of the family were either taken for granted or surrounded by a wall of idealization which preserved them from the attention given to the disintegration of the family.

Yet alarm at the disintegration of the family seems to be restricted historically in neither time nor place. In a sense it seems always to have been so since man became intelligent enough to be guided by anything other than instincts in his social relations. Wherever deviations from the accepted norm in family relations have arisen, there has tended to develop spontaneous concern for the preservation of the family. In simpler societies this concern takes the form of gossip about those who seem not in accord with the folk ways and mores, and finds more general formulation in the protestations of the elders. In more complex societies these protestations become more formal in the pronouncements from the pulpit and through the printed page. Protestations give way to organized community action, culminating in movements and specialized institutions for the conservation of the family.

This universal alarm which arises when the family seems about to disintegrate grows out of two characteristics of the family as a phase of human nature. In the first place, the

family has always seemed to be closer to the personalities of its members than has any other of the social institutions. In the past, at least, the fortune and fate of the individual have been so inextricably bound up with that of the family. While this closeness of identity between the individual and the family has tended to be weakened in modern life, the close resemblance between the core of personality and the family pattern tends to make any threat of family disintegration a challenge to personal integrity.

Furthermore, closely related to, as well as the result of, the closeness of the family to personality is the sacredness with which it has been accorded. The result has been the reverence of the family as somehow different from the other institutions of man—a thing set apart for the fulfilment of the wishes of the gods. This attitude has, of course, not only fostered interest and concern in the disintegration of the family, but it has also acted as an impediment to any rational attempt to understand the forces making for its dissolution.<sup>1</sup>

#### DIVORCE AS A FORM OF FAMILY DISINTEGRATION

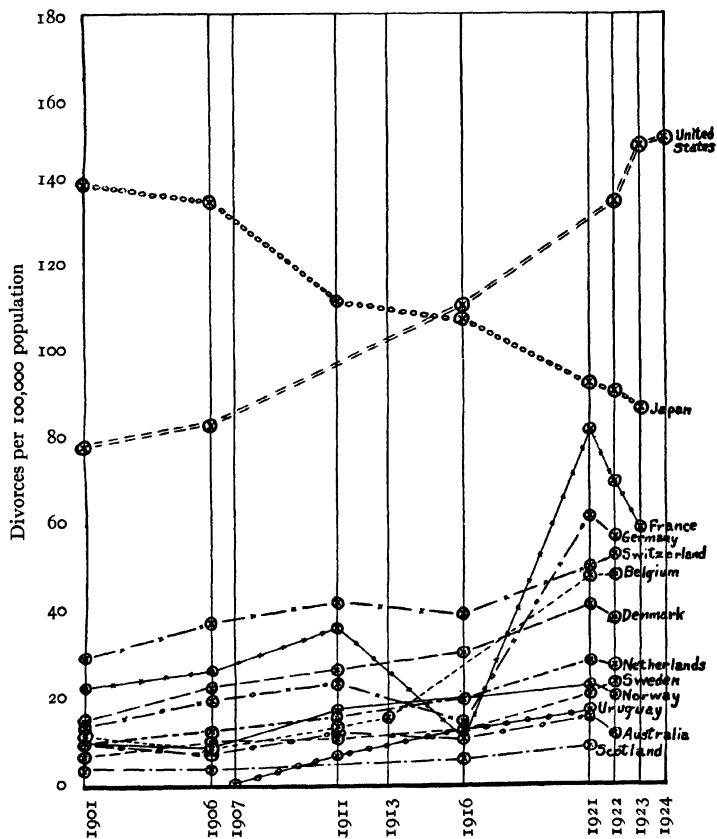
As a modern problem, however, alarm at the disintegration of the family has grown out of the observation of the rapidly mounting divorce rate throughout a great part of the world. Chart I shows the divorce trend for thirteen countries, including the United States. It is quite apparent from this chart that each of the countries, with the exception of Japan, has experienced a decided increase of divorce in recent years.

The United States probably exceeds any other country in the world in its divorce rate, if one may judge from the data

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 25 ff.

## CHART I

## THE INTERNATIONAL DIVORCE TREND, 1901-24



for those countries for which such data are available. Yet it is doubtful if the divorce rate is increasing as rapidly in the United States as in some European countries—for instance, France and Germany. However, careful consideration of the divorce trend in the United States over a longer period of time furnishes evidence of a decided upward movement, as may be seen in Chart II.

Analysis of the divorce rates of states reveals such wide differences in rates as to suggest not only that a composite curve for the United States as a whole is misleading, but also that urbanization may be related to the increase in divorce. If this were true, one would expect to find either that the urban divorce rate was consistently higher than the rate in rural areas, or that the latter was increasing less rapidly. In fact, it is the last which turns out most accurately to describe the situation, as can be seen in Chart III. These data reveal little difference in the urban and rural rates for the earlier period. Beginning somewhere between the years 1906 and 1916, however, there seems to have been a decided change in the direction of the urban trend.

Aside from the consideration of the relative merits of the technical methods used in determining trends,<sup>1</sup> there still remains the question, Is the family disintegrating more rapidly at the present time than it has in the past? Unfortunately, careful scrutiny of the data on divorce does not afford any ready answer to this question. In fact, it is quite possible that an increasing liberality in divorce laws and their administration might produce the increasing number of divorces which these trends indicate without in any way changing the amount of family disintegration for any of the years under observation. In other words, these data may

<sup>1</sup> See Mowrer, *Family Disorganization*, pp. 29-50.

CHART II

DIVORCES PER 100,000 POPULATION IN THE UNITED STATES, 1870-1929

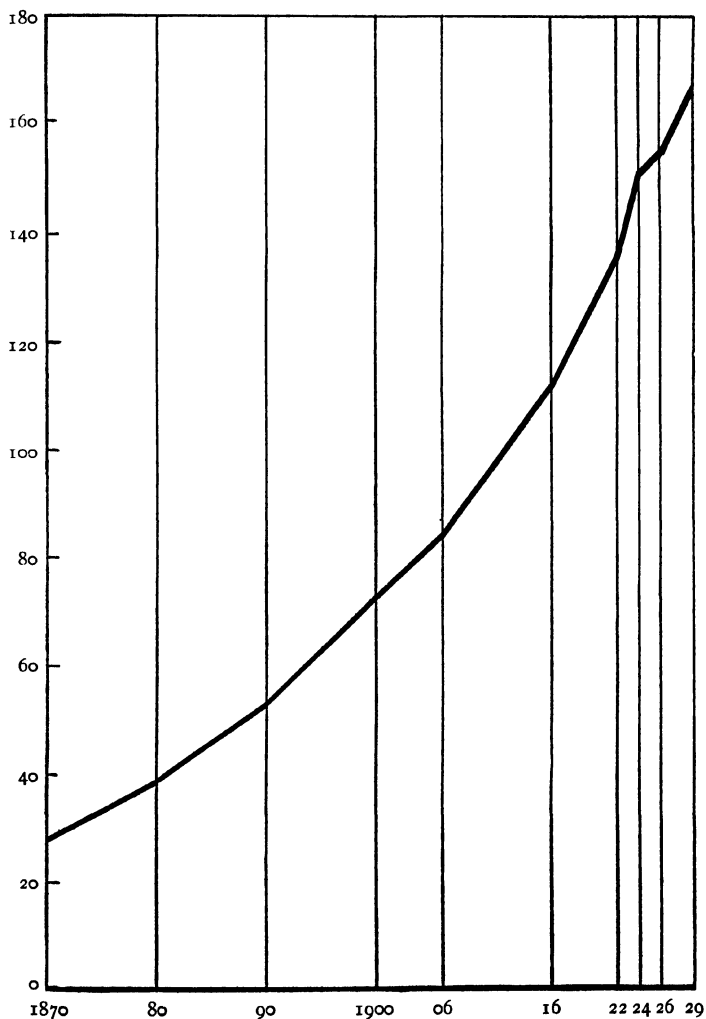
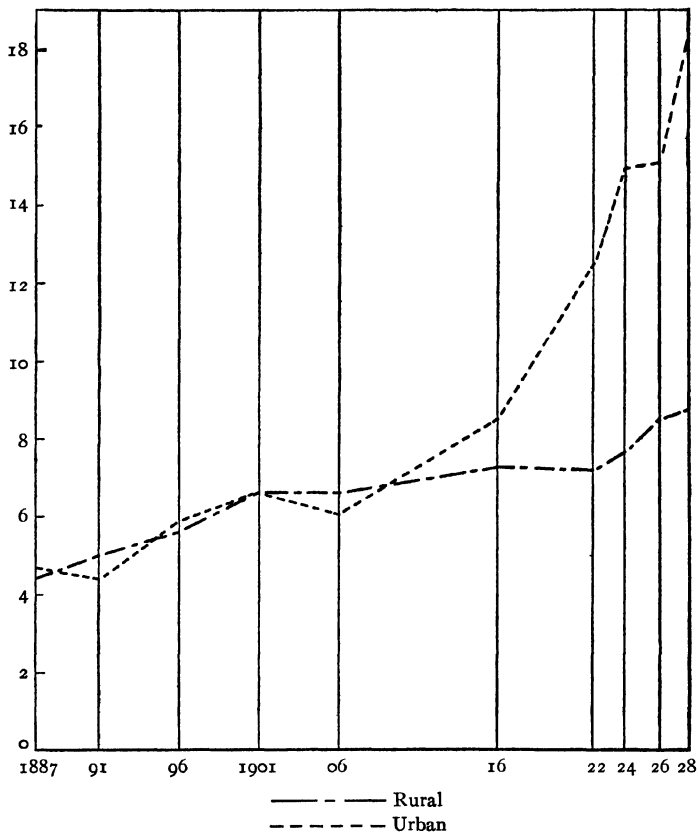


CHART III

NUMBER OF DIVORCES PER 100 MARRIAGES FOR RURAL AND URBAN  
AREAS IN THE UNITED STATES, 1887-1928



indicate nothing more than that an increasing proportion of disintegrated families find in divorce a convenient finale to a relationship which has already been disrupted. This conclusion is all the more forced upon one as at least a part of the explanation when one compares the states within the Union. Certainly, it is hard to believe that the family in Nevada is 2,813 times as disintegrated as in South Carolina. Yet there were in 1929 that many times as many divorces granted per 100,000 population.

This suggests a second question, closely related to the first: Do divorce rates show the relative degree of family disintegration between countries or states? It is more or less obvious that if the difference in trends may be explained as a result of changes in the legislation governing divorce and the administration of such legislation, then differences in the rates of divorce for any particular period may simply reflect the legal situations in each of the political units. There is, in other words, no assurance that the ratio between divorces and disintegrated families is constant as one passes from one country, or state, to another. The divorce rate cannot, therefore, be looked upon as a reliable index of the volume of family disintegration except where the legal restrictions, either as legislative enactments or as administrative practices, are the same.

#### THE CAUSES OF DIVORCE

Studies of divorce trends have always, perhaps, had back of them the drive to determine the causes of divorce. Variance between rates, or between trends, have been looked upon as a method for getting at a partial explanation, at least, of the practice. The implication of such studies is that the explanation of the variances observed lies in the differ-



ences in the customs and practices of the people within each of the geographical or political areas. If, however, this less direct approach leads only to reflection of the varying legal situations, a more direct approach seems to be the logical alternative. The natural result of this conviction is to analyze divorce as it is found where the legal situation is constant, i.e., within a country, a state, or other governmental unit in which the law and its administration under which divorce is granted are the same for the whole area under consideration.

The United States Bureau of the Census has for years compiled divorce statistics by legal causes. Since, however, these data are for states showing considerable variation in legal situations, and since even within states there may be considerable variation in administrative practices, the meaning of such analyses is not clear. The alternative seems to be an analysis of divorce in a more compact area in which the likelihood of constant legal situation is greater.

Compilation of divorce data for Cook County, Illinois, in 1919 showed desertion to be the most frequent legal cause in that area. This fact is shown in Table I, which reveals also that cruelty was the legal cause in about half as many cases as was desertion, and adultery about half as often as cruelty. Other legal causes were found in decreasing proportions. Do these results furnish a clue to an understanding of what brought about the divorces granted?

In order to answer the question, What do legal causes show relative to the situations bringing about divorce? certificates of evidence in 1,000 cases were read. Eliminating all cases in which divorce was granted for other causes than desertion, cruelty, and adultery, and disregarding also those cases in which the evidence revealed nothing more about the

situations than the legal causes indicate, there remained 542 cases in which there was to be found additional data more

TABLE I

DIVORCES CLASSIFIED BY CAUSES AND BY PARTY TO WHOM GRANTED,  
CHICAGO, 1919

CAUSES	ALL CASES		PARTY TO WHOM DECREE WAS GRANTED				
	Number	Percent- age	Husband		Wife		Not Report- ing
			Number	Percent- age	Number	Percent- age	
Total.....	6,094	100.0	1,615	100.0	4,467	100.0	12
Desertion.....	3,044	50.0	1,073	66.3	1,967	44.1	4
Cruelty.....	1,672	27.5	101	6.3	1,570	35.2	1
Adultery.....	783	12.7	391	24.2	392	8.8	.....
Drunkenness.....	371	6.1	24	1.5	346	7.7	1
Conviction of felony...	54	0.9	.....	.....	54	1.2	.....
Cruelty and drunken- ness.....	57	0.9	2	0.1	55	1.2	.....
Desertion and cruelty..	24	0.4	3	0.2	21	0.5	.....
Cruelty and adultery..	13	0.2	2	0.1	11	0.2	.....
Desertion and drunken- ness.....	11	0.2	.....	.....	11	0.2	.....
Impotency.....	17	0.3	3	0.2	14	0.3	.....
Bigamy.....	12	0.2	3	0.2	9	0.2	.....
Adultery and drunken- ness.....	5	0.1	1	0.1	4	0.1	.....
Desertion and adultery.	17	0.3	9	0.6	8	0.2	.....
Attempt to take life...	5	0.1	2	0.1	3	0.1	.....
Desertion and bigamy..	1	*	.....	.....	1	*	.....
Cruelty and attempt to take life.....	2	*	1	0.1	1	*	.....
Not reporting cause...	6	0.1	.....	.....	.....	.....	6

\*Less than 0.1 per cent.

descriptive of the situation than what the legal causes alone showed. In 76 of these cases, however, the situations described were peculiar to the cause with which they were

associated. In the remaining 466 cases there was an overlapping of descriptive data and causes, as shown in Table II.

Each of the descriptive characterizations revealed by the evidence is common to two or more of the legal causes—desertion, cruelty, and adultery. Financial tension, for example, is common to cases where both desertion and cruelty were the legal causes. Infidelity, jealousy, illicit intercourse,

TABLE II  
THE VARIANCE BETWEEN NATURAL AND LEGAL CAUSES

APPARENT NATURAL CAUSES	NUMBER	PERCENT- AGE OF ALL CASES	LEGAL CAUSES		
			Desertion	Cruelty	Adultery
Total.....	466	100.0	231	139	96
Financial tension.....	187	40.1	119	68	.....
Infidelity, jealousy, illicit intercourse, venereal in- fection.....	116	25.0	31	22	63
Desertion for and living with another.....	72	15.5	39	.....	33
Drink and cruelty.....	72	15.5	29	43	.....
Irregular habits.....	19	4.0	13	6	.....

venereal infection, form common backgrounds to desertion, cruelty, and adultery. Similar overlapping is shown for each of the remaining descriptive summaries.<sup>1</sup> The conclusion seems to follow that the so-called causes prescribed by law are not in reality the causes of cleavage between husband and wife, but are instead the *externalia* which for reasons of appropriateness or expediency were chosen to cloak the ruptured relationship. Such being the case, what can be learned about the causal situations culminating in divorce through an analysis of divorce cases?

<sup>1</sup> See Mowrer, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-72, for a more complete analysis of these findings.

## FACTORS IN DIVORCE CASES

The way out of the dilemma in which one finds himself in attempting to analyze divorce data for the purpose of getting at causal factors seems to be in the direction of comparing the varying frequencies with which certain characteristics appear when the whole is broken up into parts. If it were discovered, for example, that desertion were a more frequent legal cause for divorce where the complainant had red hair as compared to those cases in which the hair of the complainant was of another color, one would be inclined to suspect that there was some connection between hair color and desertion. It is this sort of analysis, therefore, which suggests itself to the statistical analyst who has abandoned hope of getting at causes by tabulating the frequency of legal causes or grounds.

A current observation is concerned with what seems to be the infrequent presence of children in families culminating in divorce. If one examines the data of the United States Bureau of the Census with reference to the proportion of divorce cases in which there were children, he will find that this group constitutes approximately 37 per cent of all cases. The data for Cook County in 1919 show approximately the same results. The general conclusion has often been that childlessness is one of the causes of divorce. But such a conclusion implies that childlessness is more common among families culminating in divorce than in those in which there has not yet been a divorce. To be sure that such is the case it would be necessary to have statistics of couples whose duration of married life is proportionately distributed in the same manner as in the divorce group, but who have not been divorced. Then, assuming that these two groups were essentially alike except for childlessness, if there were chil-

dren in a larger proportion of families in the "normal" group than in the divorce group, one would conclude that there must be some connection between childlessness and divorce. Since, however, such data are not available, there seems to be little or no basis for generalization along this line.<sup>1</sup>

TABLE III  
RELATION OF CHILDREN TO PARTY SECURING DIVORCE

CLASS WITH RESPECT TO CHILDREN	TOTAL		DIVORCE GRANTED TO				
	Number	Percent- age	Husband		Wife		No Record
			Number	Percent- age	Number	Percent- age	
All cases . .	6,094	100.0	1,615	100.0	4,467	100.0	12
No children . . .	3,829	62.8	1,120	69.3	2,703	60.5	6
Children . . . . .	2,265	37.2	495	30.7	1,764	39.5	6

There are, however, certain relationships between the presence or absence of children in the family and other phases of the situation which are interesting. One finds, for example, no children more frequently where the divorce is granted to the husband than where granted to the wife (see Table III).<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, desertion is more frequently the

<sup>1</sup> Strangely enough, in cases coming to the Court of Domestic Relations in Chicago approximately 70 per cent had children. This has led to the paradoxical situation in the literature upon divorce and desertion. Whereas students of divorce have asserted that the absence of children makes for divorce, students of desertion have been convinced that the presence of children, at least in large numbers, makes for desertion and non-support. But since divorce and desertion are all outgrowths of domestic discord, it would seem more logical to say that children may, or may not, make for conflict between husband and wife, depending upon the attitudes of each toward their children.

<sup>2</sup> For the statistical justification of these conclusions and for a more extended analysis of the interrelationship between various factors in divorce cases the reader should refer to pp. 73-108 of the writer's *Family Disorganization*.

legal cause for divorce where there are no children than otherwise, as is shown in Table IV. The same thing is true where the legal cause is adultery. Drunkenness, on the other hand, is much more commonly the legal cause where there are children than where there are none. Whether these results indicate anything other than a solicitous attitude toward children on the part of the courts and of the parents is hard to say from these facts alone. Certainly it is true that where

TABLE IV  
SIZE OF FAMILY AND LEGAL CAUSE FOR DIVORCE

No. CHILDREN	TOTAL PERCENT-AGE	LEGAL CAUSES FOR DIVORCE				
		Percentage Desertion	Percentage Cruelty	Percentage Adultery	Percentage Drunkenness	Percentage of Others
Total.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Less than three..	85.4	87.4	84.1	84.4	77.5	90.3
Three or more...	14.6	12.6	15.9	15.6	22.5	9.7

children are involved in divorce cases greater attention is given on the part of the court than where there are no children.

Furthermore, there seems to be some relationship between the size of the family and the legal cause for divorce. Desertion is more frequently the legal cause in families where there are less than three children as compared to those in which there are three or more children. Drunkenness, on the other hand, is more commonly the legal cause where there are three or more children than where there are less than three children.

Another interesting relationship revealed through the

analysis of divorce data is that between the duration of married life and the party to whom the decree was granted. Where the couple has lived together less than five years, the husband is more commonly the recipient of the decree than

TABLE V

DISTRIBUTION OF CASES BY FIVE-YEAR PERIODS OF MARRIED LIFE  
AND CLASSIFIED BY PARTY TO WHOM DECREE WAS  
GRANTED, CHICAGO, 1919

MARRIED LIFE BY FIVE-YEAR PERIODS	ALL CASES		DECREE TO				
	Number	Percent- age	Husband		Wife		Not Report- ing
			Number	Percent- age	Number	Percent- age	
Total.....	6,094	100.0	1,615	100.0	4,467	100.0	12
0-4.....	3,164	51.9	887	55.0	2,273	50.8	4
5-9.....	1,515	24.8	367	22.7	1,141	25.5	7
10-14.....	743	12.3	176	10.9	566	12.6	1
15-19.....	348	5.7	86	5.3	262	6.0	.....
20-24.....	191	3.1	57	3.5	134	3.0	.....
25-29.....	70	1.2	23	1.4	47	1.1	.....
30-34.....	25	0.4	11	0.7	14	0.3	.....
35-39.....	15	0.2	3	0.2	12	0.3	.....
40-44.....	4	0.1	1	0.1	3	0.1	.....
Not reporting..	19	0.3	4	0.2	15	0.3	.....

the wife (see Table V). That this indicates a tendency on the part of the wife to give up the experiment more quickly than the husband, however, one cannot conclude upon the basis of these facts alone.

#### ECONOMIC FACTORS AND DIVORCE

Analysis of the interrelations between attributes of divorce cases is, unfortunately, a restricted approach and shows one little about the internal factors in the disintegra-

tion of the family. Some writers, in particular Hexter<sup>1</sup> and Thomas,<sup>2</sup> have sought to avoid this restriction by an analysis of the correlation between divorce trends and business conditions.

Hexter's analysis is concerned chiefly with seasonal fluctuations and cyclical movements in Suffolk County, Massachusetts. He finds that seasonal fluctuations in the number of divorces is closely related to the number of marriages four months earlier. Hexter suggests that this may be due to the fact that in Massachusetts a marriage may be declared void if there has been a violation of the marriage laws, and this would take about four months.<sup>3</sup>

Hexter further finds a close positive relationship between divorce and employment five months earlier. He does not, however, suggest any explanation for this observation,<sup>4</sup> except to conclude that "bad times do not occasion a rise in divorces."<sup>5</sup>

The cyclical correlation which Hexter makes is that between divorce libels and wholesale prices. The highest coefficient is found where divorces lag twenty-four months behind the curve of wholesale prices. The coefficient, however, is so small that Hexter makes no attempt to interpret his findings except to conclude that "divorces are not as sensitive as are such human incidents as births, deaths, and marriages, when compared with economic conditions and influences."<sup>6</sup>

Hexter's findings, however, are somewhat at variance with those of other investigators. Willcox, in his study of divorce rates in the United States for the period 1866-86,

<sup>1</sup> *Social Consequences of Business Cycles.*

<sup>2</sup> *Social Aspects of the Business Cycle.*

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 96-97.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 97-98.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 114.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 159.



found low rates for the periods 1873-79 and 1884-86, which were also periods of depression in trade. This led him to conclude that there was a causal relationship between trade and divorce.<sup>1</sup> Ogburn and Thomas found confirming evidence of this close relationship by correlating the divorce cycle for the period 1867-1906 with the business cycle.<sup>2</sup> Their interpretation, however, is simply that lawyers' fees, court fees, and alimony make divorce expensive and therefore lead to its restriction in times of depression.<sup>3</sup>

Thomas finds that in England and Wales, on the other hand, there is no connection between divorce and business conditions. This, she concludes, may be due to the fact that divorce is relatively infrequent in these countries and restricted to a small class of the population.<sup>4</sup>

Findings in analyses of the connection between divorce and business conditions are, accordingly, somewhat contradictory. Yet it seems clear that no one who has studied the problem carefully is inclined to interpret the connection, if there be one, as due to anything other than the cost of divorce as a legal procedure. The relationship between family disintegration and business conditions, therefore, is still to be determined.

Studies of divorce thus lead one to the conclusion that divorce rates do not provide a reliable index of family disintegration since they are so much a function of the legal procedure. Furthermore, it is generally known that divorce is characteristic of certain classes in the population. For the poor, the expense of divorce may be prohibitive. Certain

<sup>1</sup> "A Study in Vital Statistics," *Pol. Sci. Quart.*, VIII, No. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 67; also printed in the *Quart. Pub. Amer. Stat. Assoc.*, September, 1922.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 91-92.

religious groups do not permit divorce. Where divorce is denied a group, other ways are found for ending family relations. The most important of these are separation, desertion, and non-support.

#### DESERTION AS A FORM OF FAMILY DISINTEGRATION<sup>1</sup>

"Desertion is the poor man's divorce" expresses the social worker's conviction that both forms of family disintegration are essentially alike. Desertion characterizes the poverty group with which the social worker is in contact, whereas divorce is confined largely to the upper and middle classes. That the motives bringing about divorce in one case and desertion in the other are fundamentally alike, however, is implied in the expression.

The term "desertion" is, of course, not entirely an exact one. Generally, however, desertion refers to the act of either the husband or the wife leaving home without giving any information as to his or her destination. If the husband fails to support his family, whether he continues to live at home or leaves, his destination being known, the case is one of non-support. Separation indicates that the couple live apart by prearrangement. In the nature of things, however, there tends to be a great deal of overlapping. Thus a husband may leave his wife without her consent, continue to support the family, have his whereabouts known, and still be considered as having deserted them, especially if he has gone to another locality. In current usage, therefore, the term "desertion" is often used to include all cases in which legal action is thought necessary to bring about the re-establishment of, or to prevent the discontinuance of, certain minimal family relations, usually in the form of economic support. It is in this

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Mowrer, *Family Disorganization*, pp. 89 ff.

broader sense, accordingly, that the term will be used subsequently.

No comparative studies of desertion rates in various countries, or in different areas within the same country, have been made. Neither are such studies feasible, owing either to the lack of the necessary data or to the fact that what data are available are not comparable. These difficulties grow out of one's source of knowledge of desertion cases, namely, the records of special courts for the enforcement of non-support laws and those of charitable agencies. Since there is considerable fluctuation in legal practices from place to place as well as in the policies of social agencies, data from these sources lead to much the same errors when comparisons are made, as has already been found to characterize divorce statistics.

#### FACTORS IN DESERTION<sup>1</sup>

In order to avoid the pitfalls of comparisons between non-comparable data, students of desertion have turned almost with one accord to the analysis of desertion within local areas in which the legal situation and the policies of social agencies are both constant. The problem, therefore, is to find the interrelations between characteristics of desertion cases.

Nationality has, in every major study of desertion, been thought to be related in some way to the disintegration of the family. Both Colcord and Brandt conclude that nationality is a factor in desertion,<sup>2</sup> whereas Eubank and Patterson offer conclusions somewhat at va-

<sup>1</sup> For a more extended analysis and a more complete presentation of data see Mowrer, *Family Disorganization*, pp. 92-108.

<sup>2</sup> Brandt, *Five Hundred and Seventy-four Deserters and Their Families*, pp. 18-19; Colored, *Broken Homes*, pp. 44-45.

riance with this interpretation. Eubank concludes that desertion is an effect of the social situation rather than a racial or national characteristic. Yet his own statistics show considerable differences in desertion rates by nationality.<sup>1</sup> Patterson, on the other hand, concludes that his data do not prove nationality to be a causal factor, though they show that certain nationalities are disproportionately represented by desertion cases.<sup>2</sup>

Table VI shows the distribution by place of birth of the husbands in cases coming into the Chicago Court of Domestic Relations in 1921 in comparison to that of persons in the city. These results show a disproportionately large number of husbands born in Poland, Russia, Italy, Austria, Greece, and also of native Negroes. White husbands born in the United States, as well as those born in Sweden, are disproportionately small in numbers in comparison to numbers in the total population. Those groups, however, which furnish disproportionately large numbers of cases of desertion are also characteristically of low economic status. There is little assurance, therefore, that such data show anything more than the disproportionate numbers of certain national groups in the social class from which desertion cases come.<sup>3</sup>

All attempts, accordingly, to get at the factors causing desertion are doomed to failure so long as analyses are limited to comparisons between desertion cases and population. The sort of comparisons which are required are those in which the control groups are drawn from the same social class as are the desertion cases. In the absence of such comparative

<sup>1</sup> *A Study of Family Desertion*, pp. 15-16.

<sup>2</sup> "Family Desertion and Non-Support," *Jour. Delin.*, VII, 270-72.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Mowrer, *op. cit.*, pp. 92-96.

data one is forced to limit his analysis to comparisons between subgroups within the whole.

Since differences in nationality between husband and wife have long been thought to be a causative factor in deser-

TABLE VI

DISTRIBUTION OF DESERTION CASES BY NATIVITY OF HUSBAND  
IN COMPARISON WITH POPULATION, CHICAGO, 1921

NATIVITY	POPULATION		DESERTION	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Total.....	2,701,705	100.0	2,661	100.0
United States—white.....	1,787,765	66.3	1,224	46.0
United States—Negro.....	109,458	4.0	414	15.6
Poland.....	136,611	5.0	259	9.7
Germany.....	112,288	4.2	101	3.8
Russia.....	102,095	3.8	143	5.4
Italy.....	59,215	2.2	94	3.5
Sweden.....	58,563	2.1	35	1.3
Ireland.....	56,786	2.1	54	2.0
Czechoslovakia.....	50,392	1.9	39	1.5
England including Scotland....	36,330	1.3	35	1.3
Austria.....	30,491	1.1	46	1.7
Hungary.....	26,106	1.0	34	1.3
Canada.....	26,054	1.0	20	0.8
Norway.....	20,481	0.7	17	0.6
Lithuania.....	18,923	0.7	39	1.5
Greece.....	11,546	0.4	24	0.9
Other countries.....	58,601	2.1	83	0.7

tion,<sup>1</sup> this suggests breaking up desertion cases into two subgroups: those in which husband and wife are of the same nationality, and those in which their nationalities are different. The first type of marriage may be designated "like" to differentiate it from the other, which may be called "mixed."

Mixed marriages differ from like marriages in distribution by nationality of husband. There are more Americans, Ger-

<sup>1</sup> See Colcord, *op. cit.*, p. 26; Brandt, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-19.

mans, Swedes, Irish, Canadians, English, Norwegians, Danes, Greeks, Scotch, and French, and fewer Poles, Jews, Negroes, and Lithuanians among the mixed marriages than among the like marriages (see Table VII). What this shows, other than that the national composition of the two groups is not constant for both mixed and like marriages, is hard to say. It may indicate that intermarriage is more prevalent among some nationalities than others, or it may indirectly reflect the effect of intermarriage upon desertion. Without a control group of non-desertion cases, however, there is no way of telling which, if either, of these interpretations is true.

Differences in nationality, however, seem to be related to the duration of married life. The proportions of cases falling in the first two five-year intervals is considerably higher for mixed marriages in comparison to like marriages, as is shown in Table VIII. Though again the interpretation that this means a tendency for desertion to appear more quickly where there is intermarriage has to be taken with a great deal of caution. Since it has already been shown that the two groups, like marriages and mixed marriages, differ in national composition, and since one cannot be sure that the duration of married life is constant for all nationalities, the results in Table VIII may simply reflect the differences in distribution of nationalities in the two groups.

Differences in religion, long thought to be causally related to desertion,<sup>1</sup> present much the same situation as has already been pointed out for differences in nationality. Absence of an appropriate control group makes interpretation of statistical data speculative and dubious. Yet some results can be arrived at indirectly.

<sup>1</sup> See Colcord, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

If, for example, one takes all the mixed marriages and compares the distributions of each of the religious groups by

TABLE VII  
DISTRIBUTION OF CASES BY NATIONALITY FOR LIKE MARRIAGES  
AND FOR MIXED MARRIAGES

NATIONALITY	TOTAL CASES		TYPE OF MARRIAGE			
	Number	Percentage	Like		Mixed	
			Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Total.....	2,661	100.0	1,725	100.0	936	100.0
American.....	607	22.8	321	18.6	286	30.6
Negro.....	414	15.6	414	24.1	.....	.....
Polish.....	325	12.2	280	16.2	45	4.8
German.....	314	11.8	135	7.8	179	19.1
Jewish.....	199	7.5	180	10.4	19	2.0
Irish.....	147	5.5	67	3.9	80	8.5
Italian.....	110	4.1	79	4.6	31	3.3
Bohemian.....	69	2.6	45	2.6	24	2.6
Swedish.....	63	2.4	26	1.5	37	4.0
English.....	49	1.8	7	0.4	42	4.5
Austrian.....	47	1.7	32	1.9	15	1.6
Lithuanian.....	39	1.5	35	2.3	4	0.4
Russian.....	38	1.4	19	1.1	19	2.0
Canadian.....	34	1.3	4	0.2	30	3.2
Hungarian.....	33	1.2	27	1.6	6	0.6
Norwegian.....	29	1.1	11	0.6	18	1.9
Greek.....	24	0.9	4	0.2	20	2.1
Scotch.....	24	0.9	3	0.2	21	2.2
Danish.....	16	0.6	5	0.3	11	1.2
French.....	16	0.6	.....	.....	16	1.7
Dutch.....	10	0.4	2	0.1	8	0.9
Jugo-Slav.....	9	0.3	7	0.4	2	0.2
Belgian.....	8	0.3	2	0.1	6	0.6
Swiss.....	7	0.3	1	0.1	6	0.6
Roumanian.....	4	0.1	3	0.2	1	0.1
All others.....	26	1.0	16	0.9	10	1.1

five-year periods of married life, he finds little difference in the several distributions. This is shown in Table IX, and seems to indicate that religious differences superimposed

TABLE VIII

TYPE OF MARRIAGE AND DURATION OF MARRIED LIFE

YEARS OF MARRIED LIFE	TOTAL		TYPE OF MARRIAGE			
	Number	Percentage	Like		Mixed	
			Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Total.....	2,661	100.0	1,725	100.0	936	100.0
0-4.....	1,268	47.7	769	44.6	499	53.5
5-9.....	627	23.6	295	21.9	332	25.2
10-14.....	371	13.9	180	13.4	191	14.5
15-19.....	206	7.7	101	7.5	105	8.0
20-24.....	96	3.6	60	4.5	36	2.7
25-29.....	45	1.7	27	2.0	18	1.4
30-44.....	31	1.1	18	1.3	13	1.0
Not reporting..	17	0.6	8	0.6	9	0.7

TABLE IX

DISTRIBUTION OF DESERTIONS BY FIVE-YEAR PERIODS OF MARRIED LIFE AND BY RELIGIONS: MIXED MARRIAGES

YEARS OF MARRIED LIFE	TOTAL		RELIGION								
	Number	Per- cent- age	Cath.		Prot.		Cath.-Prot.		Jew.-Prot. or Cath.		No Re- port- ing
			Num- ber	Per- cent- age	Num- ber	Per- cent- age	Num- ber	Per- cent- age	Num- ber	Per- cent- age	Num- ber
Total...	936	100.0	344	100.0	303	100.0	244	100.0	31	100.0	14
0-4.....	499	53.5	188	54.7	150	49.5	131	53.7	22	72.0	8
5-9.....	230	24.6	85	24.9	79	26.0	54	22.1	7	22.6	5
10-14.....	104	11.1	41	11.9	35	11.5	25	10.2	2	6.4	1
15-19.....	55	5.9	15	4.3	23	7.6	17	7.0	.....	.....	.....
20-24.....	24	2.6	10	2.9	7	2.3	7	2.8	.....	.....	.....
25-29.....	12	1.3	3	0.9	4	1.3	5	2.0	.....	.....	.....
30-44.....	9	0.9	1	0.3	5	1.6	3	1.2	.....	.....	.....
Not reporting	3	0.3	1	0.3	.....	.....	2	0.8	.....	.....	.....



upon national differences have little or no effect upon desertion. If, however, the comparison is for like marriages, the proportions of desertions falling within the first five-year interval is considerably higher for the Protestants as compared to the Catholics, and higher than either of these for

TABLE X

DISTRIBUTION OF DESERTIONS BY FIVE-YEAR PERIODS OF MARRIED LIFE AND BY RELIGIONS: LIKE MARRIAGES

YEARS OF MARRIED LIFE	TOTAL		RELIGION								
	Num-ber	Per-cent-age	Cath.		Prot.		Cath.-Prot.		Jewish		Not Re- port- ing
			Num-ber	Per-cent-age	Num-ber	Per-cent-age	Num-ber	Per-cent-age	Num-ber	Per-cent-age	
Total..	1,725	100.0	667	100.0	711	100.0	141	100.0	180	100.0	26
0-4.....	769	44.6	236	35.2	350	49.4	81	57.5	88	49.0	14
5-9.....	397	23.0	157	23.6	169	23.8	20	14.2	47	26.1	4
10-14.....	267	15.5	143	21.4	78	11.0	22	15.6	19	10.6	5
15-19.....	151	8.7	68	10.2	60	8.4	8	5.7	13	7.2	2
20-24.....	72	4.2	41	6.2	23	3.2	5	3.5	3	1.7	....
25-29.....	33	1.9	10	1.5	14	2.0	4	2.8	5	2.8	....
30-44.....	22	1.3	8	1.2	10	1.4	....	....	3	1.7	1
Not report- ing.....	14	0.8	4	0.6	7	1.0	1	0.7	2	1.1	....

intermarriages between Catholics and Protestants (see Table X). This seems to indicate that the probability of early desertion is increased where there are religious differences but no differences in nationality. The difference between the Catholics and Protestants in all probability simply reflects differences in national composition of the two groups.

Statistical analysis of factors in desertion, accordingly, seems to lead almost inevitably to a skeptical attitude to-

ward the so-called causes of desertion. One wonders whether or not the characteristics with which students of desertion have been concerned are not incidental to desertion. At least it seems clear that if these traits have any significance at all it is only in combination with other traits. It is out of some such realization as this, perhaps, that has come the attempt to discover desertion types.

#### DESERTION TYPES

In the drive to differentiate desertion types the method of approach has shifted from the statistical to the case-study. Cases are classified with the idea of determining what are the fundamental ways in which one group differs from another. The emphasis is no longer upon a single trait, but upon a combination of elements. The case is thus treated as a whole rather than being broken up into parts, the assumption being that qualitative differences may arise out of differences in the interrelation between factors as well as in their absence or presence.

The first indications of this change in approach in the study of desertion may be seen in Miss Brandt's description of the typical deserter.<sup>1</sup> Not that Miss Brandt intended this as the introduction of a departure in method, for her analysis is almost entirely statistical, and it would seem that she presented her picture of the typical deserter as a graphic way of summarizing what she considered to be the most outstanding factors in desertion. Whatever influence this presentation had upon the subsequent study of desertion, therefore, was accidental rather than intended. Nevertheless, out of this seemingly insignificant beginning has developed what promises to be a more fruitful method of studying desertion

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 63.

than that represented in the statistical study of the problem.

Eubank continued this line of development by presenting a number of typical cases which, presumably, cover the whole range of desertion cases as far as they come to the attention of a social-work agency. His classification is as follows:

- A. The Spurious Deserter
- B. The Gradual Deserter
- C. The Intermittent Husband
  - a) The Periodic Deserter
  - b) The Temperamental Deserter
- D. The Ill-advised Marriage Type
- E. The Last Resort Type<sup>1</sup>

Careful analysis of the cases given to illustrate each of the types, however, reveals that the chief considerations serving as a basis for classification were the administrative needs of the agency. The problems of paramount interest to the case-worker are: (1) Shall the family be aided? (2) Is there any hope of reconciliation? Facts are, of course, included which help to give the social worker a better understanding of the desertion, but this aspect is secondary in importance to the administrative problem. Yet Eubank's analysis no doubt gave impetus to a more careful consideration of cases as a whole upon the part of social workers when the necessity of handling the problem of desertion arose.

This emphasis upon the composite character of cases has been facilitated by a growing tendency in family case-work to enlarge upon the contents of the case-record by adding other data than those necessary for immediate administrative needs. Along with this expansion of the investigative technique has gone a sharpening of the discrimination between domestic-discord problems.

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 37-40.

The diagnosis of the problem of domestic discord, however, requires the recognition of a group of symptoms. These presumably constitute the social worker's range of investigation. In practice, however, family case-workers include a whole range of concrete facts not formally recognized as being particularly related to the problems under consideration. Part of this interest in unrelated data is due to the artistic tendencies of workers and part to the insistence in case-work that each case is unique and must be treated differentially. How these diagnostic factors overlap different problems may be seen in Table XI.

While it is apparent that there is considerable fluctuation in the proportionate weight of each diagnostic factor as one passes from one problem to another, no factor seems to characterize one problem to the exclusion of the others. Abuse, for example, occurs in connection with 57 per cent of the problems of domestic infelicity, 30 per cent of the problems of desertion, 35 per cent of non-support, and 41 per cent in which there are combinations of problems. Or, again, the percentages of occurrence of mental deficiency with each of the problems, domestic infelicity, desertion, non-support, and combinations, are 27, 12, 13, and 18, respectively.<sup>1</sup>

The contribution of social work to the study of the disintegration of the family has not been, accordingly, so much in the direction of discovering the interrelations between factors as it has in its emphasis upon elaboration of detail. And while there has often been a curious mixture of descriptions of overt behavior, character traits, moralistic characterizations, and descriptions of situations, the drive has been toward a constant enlargement of the field of observa-

<sup>1</sup> For a more extended analysis of diagnostic factors in social work see Mowrer, *Domestic Discord*, pp. 34-52.

## THE FAMILY

tion. In this way social work has contributed considerably in paving the way for a more organic approach to the study of the problem of family disintegration.

Beginnings of this more organic approach in which greater attention is given to tracing out in the personal and cul-

TABLE XI  
RELATION OF DIAGNOSTIC FACTORS TO PROBLEMS IN FAMILY  
CASE-WORK, CHICAGO, 1924-25

DIAGNOSTIC FACTORS	PER CENT OF CASES BY PROBLEMS				
	Total	Domestic Infelicity	Desertion	Non-Support	Combinations, Inc. Separations
Abuse.....	41	57	30	35	41
Drink.....	31	23	31	38	32
Immorality.....	30	34	27	24	31
Irregular habits.....	19	24	15	18	18
Laziness.....	18	19	29	26	15
Affinity.....	18	16	19	13	19
Mental deficiency.....	18	27	12	13	18
Bad housekeeping.....	17	22	9	12	20
Nagging.....	13	19	9	9	13
Family interference.....	13	18	9	9	12
Uncontrolled temper.....	12	21	8	4	12
Jealousy.....	9	15	6	4	8
Extravagance.....	8	12	4	5	9
Physical deficiency.....	7	8	7	3	8
Stinginess.....	6	12	2	2	7
Venereal disease.....	5	6	4	6	5
Sex refusal.....	5	11	2	2	4
Slovenliness.....	5	5	3	4	6
Excessive sex demands...	5	8	3	3	5
Children by former marriage.....	4	7	2	2	5
Discipline of children.....	4	5	2	4	4
Evil companions.....	3	7	3	2	2
Restlessness.....	2	1	4	1	2
Age differences.....	2	2	2	1	2
Sex perversion.....	2	1	1	2	2
Inadequate income.....	2	3	2	7	..
Black sheep.....	1	1	1	2	2
Religious differences.....	1	1	1	2	1
National differences.....	0.4	1	1	1	..

tural background of the family the genesis of the attitudes which culminate in the disintegration of the family are to be seen in the studies of Thomas and Znaniecki<sup>1</sup> and Miss Sherman.<sup>2</sup>

Thomas and Znaniecki in Volume V of *The Polish Peasant* present and interpret a large group of case histories in which the family has disintegrated. Interpretation is in terms of the mores of the Polish peasant and the breakdown in community control incident to the emigration of the group from the Old World to the New.

Miss Sherman uses a method somewhat comparable to that of Thomas and Znaniecki, though her emphasis is upon the individual rather than upon the group. Her interpretation, therefore, is in terms of racial characteristics in the form of ethnic traits rather than of cultural history. These traits, Miss Sherman apparently assumes, are inherited. Her analysis is therefore much more static than that of Thomas and Znaniecki.<sup>3</sup>

#### DOMESTIC DISCORD AS A PROCESS OF INTERACTION

The final step in the development of the analysis of family disintegration, to which all of the studies have contributed, is the realization that it is the process leading to the disintegration of the family which is significant and which must be understood before there can be any control. Family disintegration represents simply the finale to a long series of developments in which at some point or another conflict outweighs accommodation in the relations between husband and wife.

<sup>1</sup> *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* (1st ed.), particularly Vol. V.

<sup>2</sup> "Racial Factors in Desertion," *Family*, III, 143-47, 165-70, 197-201, 221-25.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Mowrer, *Family Disorganization*, pp. 187-94.

Studies of disintegrated families, accordingly, inevitably lead to fallacious generalizations unless a genuine attempt is made to go back into the background of family relations to discover the processes which culminated in the breakdown of the family unit. In doing this, however, the emphasis shifts from the disintegration to the disorganization of the family. The method is no longer a post-mortem examination but a genetic study of an interacting unit.

Thus the categorical conception of family disintegration gives way to the recognition of the relative disorganization of all families. The problem, therefore, is to understand the typical ways in which conflict in family relations tends to threaten the continued unity of the relationship. To do this necessitates study of the interaction between the members of the family which takes the form of conflict.

The organization of the family, as has already been shown,<sup>1</sup> is the process of building up organized attitudes in which all concur. Family disorganization represents the converse of this process in which the family complex breaks up and the ambitions and ideals of the individual members of the family become differentiated.

Family disorganization may be defined, then, so far as it concerns the relationship between husband and wife, as that series of events which tends to terminate in the disruption of the marriage union. It is, in other words, the individualization of behavior in marriage relations, as contrasted with family organization, which is the tendency toward identification of behavior in those relations.<sup>2</sup>

From the standpoint of the relationship between parents

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 92-96.

<sup>2</sup> Mowrer, *Family Disorganization*, pp. 127-44; *Domestic Discord*, pp. 25-

and children, and between the children themselves, family disorganization is usually thought to refer to an excessive amount of conflict within each of these relationships, since some differentiation of behavior is expected and looked upon as the normal thing by society. A more accurate conception, however, is the recognition of the ever present tendency toward differentiation of attitudes and wishes between parents and children and between children. It is only, accordingly, when this process is speeded up that it becomes thought of as constituting a social problem.

Studies of family disorganization, however, have been chiefly confined to analysis of the conflict between husband and wife, which may be called "domestic discord." And although there is a fundamental likeness between all forms of family disorganization, there are also differences. It is necessary, accordingly, to analyze each of these forms of family disorganization separately.

#### DOMESTIC DISCORD

With the acceptance of domestic discord as a more fundamental problem than any of the forms of family disintegration, several attempts have been made to formulate methods of analysis. Groves, for example, differentiates three kinds of what he calls "discordant families": (1) those in which the lack of harmony is concealed, (2) those in which there is acute clashing, and (3) those in which there is chronic discord.<sup>1</sup>

Burgess in his course on the family has introduced the concept "family tension" into the analysis of domestic discord. A type tension, it seems, is a typical situation in

<sup>1</sup> Some Sociological Suggestions for Treating Family Discord," *Social Forces*, VI (1928), 572.



which domestic discord may arise—the situation being described in terms of the attitudes of the marriage group. Burgess' classification of tensions is as follows: (1) economic, (2) sex, (3) health, (4) respect, (5) cultural, (6) temperament, and (7) pattern of life.

The basis of the classification used by Burgess seems to be the assumption that interaction between husband and wife occurs within certain spheres of interest in each of which there may develop tension. The tension would represent, therefore, a clash of attitudes within a particular sphere of relations.

The same notion has been developed elsewhere in which a somewhat simpler classification has been proposed. According to this treatment the tensions are: (1) incompatibility in response, (2) economic individualization, (3) cultural differentiation, and (4) individuation of life-patterns.<sup>1</sup>

Incompatibility in response has its origin in rather a wide diversity of circumstances. It may arise out of differences in the physiological impulses of sex; but, on the other hand, these differences may be either temperamental or cultural, rather than physiological. Poor health is often related to sex differences since it often leads to disinclination to sexual relations. The puritanical attitude toward sex is often a complicating factor since it creates a feeling that intimate relations should be restricted to those looking toward reproduction.

Tension also often arises out of differences in conception of response relations. Romanticism has tended to produce a flight from reality which is rarely successful by substituting affection and indirect contacts for the more direct ones. The result has been a tendency toward a complete dissocia-

<sup>1</sup> Mowrer, *Family Disorganization*, pp. 195-215.

tion between caresses and more intimate contacts as far as women are concerned, which has never been as completely accepted by men.

The puritanical taboo upon sex, however, often acts to prevent direct expression of tension in response relations. Much of the tension, accordingly, in other phases of family relations has its origin in lack of compatibility in response relations. The result is a tendency toward fusion of tensions in which a circular process is set up which leads to a compounding of conflict.

Economic individualization in particular serves as a convenient vehicle for the expression of incompatibility in response. Refusal to make satisfactory financial allowances to the wife is often justified by the husband to himself because she has refused him the sexual contacts which he wishes.

Yet not all economic individualization has a sex basis by any means. Differences in attitudes toward economic matters, which arise out of differences in training and personal experience, often give rise to conflict. Differences in standards of living, the individualization of spending, differences in attitude regarding whether or not a wife should work, vocational separation, and economic independence—all present problems which may lead to economic individualization.

The modern emancipation of women has tended to change the nature of economic conflict in particular from tensions arising out of rebellion on the part of the wife against the economic policy of her husband to jealousy between them where the wife is economically more successful than her husband. Economic independence of women is far from being accepted by men, and implies a renunciation of the "chat-tel" conception of woman's rôle with its inevitable dethrone-

ment of man. Where concessions are made, they tend to be with condescension. Tension, therefore, tends to take the form of conflict between the sexes in many instances of economic individualization.

#### CULTURAL DIFFERENTIATION

Cultural differentiation grows out of the diversity of cultures to which the two persons have been subjected. Differences in the religious, racial, and educational folk ways and mores of the groups to which the persons belonged before marriage are potent sources of conflict. Accordingly, tension tends to grow out of questions of right and wrong, proper and improper conduct.

Differences in habits, however, are not the only outgrowths of differences in folk ways. These differences tend also to make for diversity of social contacts, in connection with both cultural and recreational interests. Out of this diversity of contacts often develop changes in personality which lead to a breakdown in common interests and sympathetic relations between husband and wife. Cultural differentiation is thus closely related to individuation of life-patterns.

Individuation of life-patterns is either the outgrowth of the realization that fundamentally the two persons are not as alike as they had previously thought, or to changes subsequently in the core of either of the personalities. Fundamental differences in life-patterns are often overlooked during the period of courtship in which contacts are limited and only one phase of the personality is in evidence. Even after marriage such differences often go unnoticed until certain age periods are reached or some severe crisis accentuates the latent attitudes.

Furthermore, inasmuch as differentiation of interests and contacts often is reflected in changes in the personalities of the persons involved, divergencies in life-patterns often develop after marriage. This is particularly true where there is a high individualization of behavior as there tends to be under urban conditions where primary-group control ceases to function. Individuation of life-patterns, therefore, is much more common where contacts are spread over wide ranges, especially if there is little overlapping of those of the two persons.

Classification of tensions, however, while it does lead to the differentiation of typical conflict situations, does not necessarily furnish an analysis of the development of conflict in terms of the changes in attitudes of the individuals. Attempts to get at the development of tensional situations and to see how one leads to another is more adequately done through the behavior-sequence approach.

#### BEHAVIOR SEQUENCES IN DOMESTIC DISCORD

Two different but closely related attempts have been made to analyze behavior sequences in domestic-discord cases. Both are based upon the assumption, however, that domestic discord can become more intelligible by relating the present domestic-discord situation to the backgrounds out of which it has developed. The aim of the approach, therefore, is to arrive at typical developmental processes of conflicting interaction.

For want of a better terminology for differentiating these two attempts to analyze behavior sequences, one may speak of one as formal and the other as informal. The informal differs from the formal chiefly in representing a somewhat less abstract interpretative scheme, or pattern. Both, however,

are based upon the same assumptions regarding the essential nature of domestic discord and of its developmental character.

The informal method of analysis may be represented by the interpretation of the Xyster case:<sup>1</sup>

1. Husband's feeling of inferiority
  - a) Uncertainty of parentage
  - b) Disparagement on part of wife and family
  - c) Boarder rôle in family
2. Suggestibility of wife
  - a) Dependence on family prior to marriage and upon brother afterward
  - b) Presence of father, sister and brother in home
  - c) Rôle of husband assumed by brother
  - d) Neighborhood gossip confirms inferior position of husband
3. Compensation on part of husband through contacts outside family
  - a) Lodge activities
  - b) Rôle of sister as wife<sup>2</sup>

The more formal method of analysis may be illustrated with reference to the same case-study:

*Type of case.*—Husband and wife with different conceptions of the rôle of the husband (wife looks to her family for advice and leadership and as having final authority. Husband's conception is that he should be the one whom she should consult, i.e., the conventional American "husband" pattern).

*Response tension.*—Brought to a climax by appearance of husband's sister.

*Compensatory behavior.*—(1) Attempts of husband to secure recognition (lodge activities). (2) Attempts of husband to secure response in contacts with sister. (3) Breakdown in family unity (jealousy of wife, desertion of husband).<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See *Domestic Discord*, pp. 68-75, for details of case-study.

<sup>2</sup> This type of analysis has been developed particularly by Harriet R. Mowrer as consultant in personality and domestic-discord problems at the Jewish Social Service Bureau of Chicago. See *ibid.*, pp. 76 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Mowrer, *Family Disorganization*, pp. 216-29; 254-56.

The study of family disorganization may thus be said to have progressed from the analysis of static data presented in the form of divorce and desertion statistics to an analysis of dynamic data presented in terms of social interaction. The approach has changed from a discrete or atomic conception of human relations in domestic discord to a continuous or organic conception. In this shift the problem has changed from one of the conflicting social forces to one of conflicting personalities. And yet this shift does not imply a complete divorcement between social forces and personalities, as will be seen in the discussion of the relation of mobility to family disorganization.

#### SUGGESTED READINGS

Burgess. "The Romantic Impulse and Family Disorganization," *Survey*, LVII (December 1, 1926), 290-94.

Colcord. *Broken Homes*, chap. ii.

Groves and Ogburn. *American Marriage and Family Relationships*, chaps. xxii and xxiii.

Lichtenberger. *Divorce*.

Mowrer. *Family Disorganization*, esp. chaps. ii-vii and ix-xii.

Myerson. *The Nervous Housewife*.

Reuter and Runner. *The Family*, chaps. xv and xvi.

Thomas and Znaniecki. *The Polish Peasant* (rev. ed.), II, 1134-70 and 1703-52.

## CHAPTER IX

### FAMILY DISORGANIZATION AND URBANIZATION

That city life has a disorganizing effect upon the family is not a new idea. It is, in fact, conventional to point to the city as the breeding place of discontent with the traditional family, as well as with other traditional patterns. The country, on the other hand, is looked upon as the stronghold of the traditional—the locale of simple virtues and the bulwark against the iniquities of the city.

Studies of divorce have tended to confirm the observation of common sense—that family ties are likely to be more fragile in the city.<sup>1</sup> Newspaper accounts of divorce suits have revealed lurid aspects which have no counterpart in rural life. Would-be saviors, recently recruited from the country, have sought to stem the tide of disorganization of the family by administering rural panaceas, only to strengthen the impression that something needs to be done.

Yet while there is some truth in the feeling that family disorganization is more prevalent in the city than in the country, the implied assumption that what is true of the city as a whole is also true of each of its parts is not supported by facts. Facts seem to indicate that in every city there are areas of high and low family disorganization, often presenting a range even greater than that between the country and the city.

This wide divergency in customs and practices in different

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 148.

parts of the city is the result of certain forces and processes of differentiation in the growth of the city. As the result of this process every city is made up of many areas—residential neighborhoods, industrial communities, immigrant colonies, rooming-house districts—all tending to have their distinctive cultural characteristics, diverse by racial and national origin, by economic status, by marital conditions, and by cultural type. These cultural differences of city areas are reflected in the activities and interests of the people. Standards of all kinds vary from neighborhood to neighborhood. What is considered moral in an expensive residential district, for example, may be considered immoral in an immigrant colony.

But how do these parts of a city become differentiated? What are the forces making for segregation? What determines the boundaries of communities? How does this process of differentiation affect the family? In what way is family disorganization related: first, to the different ways of living represented by these different communities; and, second, to the forces making for the differences between one community and another?

Basically the growth of the city is a matter of physical development and the differentiation of areas upon the basis of the use to which the land is put. This process of expansion and differentiation may be represented by a series of concentric circles which show not only the successive zones but also the types of areas differentiated in the process of expansion.<sup>1</sup>

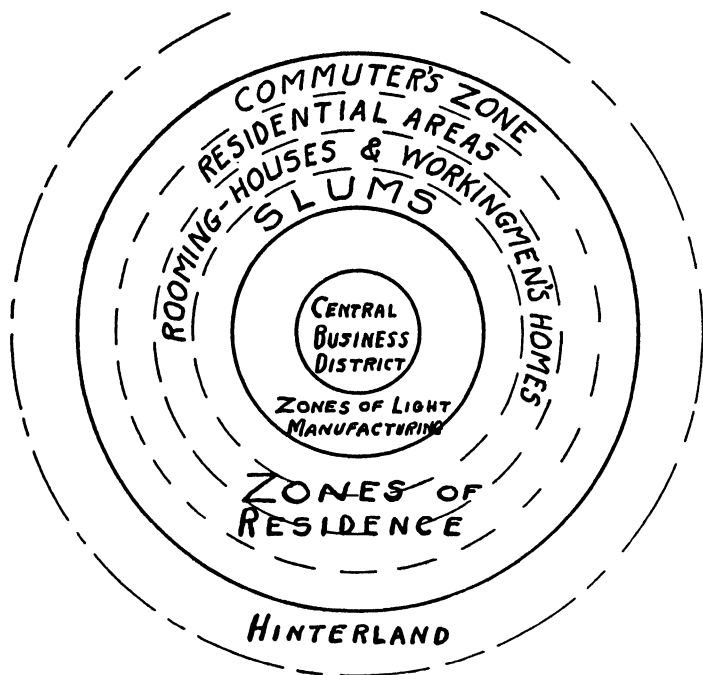
The nucleus of the city is its trade area, its market place. Every city has such a business area developing out of the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Professor Burgess' chart in Park, Burgess, McKenzie, and Wirth, *The City*, p. 51.



economic potentialities which predestined its location. This may be called the "central business district." Here are lo-

CHART IV  
THE GROWTH OF THE CITY



cated retail stores, business offices, banks, and exchanges—all the institutions of the market place. Other types of areas tend to find their places in concentric circles, or arcs, about this central zone, like the rings of a tree about the core.

First, there is the area or zone of light manufacturing, and of warehouses of all sorts. Then beyond this are the

zones of residence, of which four types may be differentiated: (a) the slums, (b) the zone of rooming-houses and working-men's homes, (c) the "residential" zone, and (d) the commuters' zone. Beyond this lies the hinterland, a vast network of villages and open country which pays homage to the city and may some day become a part of it.

The growth of the city consists in the encroachment of each inner zone upon the next outer zone. In this process, areas become transformed and take on the characteristics of the invading inner areas.

Business expands and the central business area invades the zone of light manufacturing. This second zone, in turn, invades the slum areas. In fact, this impending invasion of the surrounding territory makes it a slum. Land values increase with the encroachment of light manufacturing and warehouses, and the people who live there get out if they are able to, leaving the area to the "lost souls"—lost because they have offended against the laws and customs of the group, or because of their inability to cope with the economic conditions of their time. And while the invasion of light manufacturing raises land values, because of the dirt and grime and the deterioration of buildings rents decline. This area, accordingly, becomes the "twilight zone" into which the stranded drift and the vicious find a rendezvous. Life is in a state of flux; people live in cheap hotels, in lodging-houses, and in broken-down dwellings of another day.

The area beyond the "twilight zone" is one of rooming-houses, bohemia, radicalism, clandestine vice, and working-men's homes—these latter because of their accessibility to work. It is in this zone also in which are found those areas where people go for stimulation—to indulge tastes and ap-

petites—and for companionship. It is in the cabarets and dance halls of this zone that one finds the “professional” companion and the “charity” girl, both city types.

Beyond the second zone of residence is what has facetiously been called the “frontiers of Babbittry.” Here are the apartments and single houses in which the respectable and substantial citizenry lives. This zone spreads out in an ever widening fashion, flanked by the dormitory cities of the commuter. And beyond this is the hinterland—a vast area with its eyes toward the city and its feet in the soil.

As the city grows, therefore, there is not merely an increase in the number of buildings, an expansion over a larger territory, or a multiplication of avenues of communication. It is the accompanying process of segregation and differentiation which gives character to the areas of the city. Institutions and residences, spreading out in all directions from the center of the city, tend to find the most advantageous positions. People are drawn, likewise, by their interests to the neighborhoods especially favorable for survival and success.

The process of segregation and differentiation is further facilitated by the extension of transportation lines which not only draws the outer areas of the city toward the business center in time but also draws business out of the central areas as well. As a result there grows up a series of sub-centers which tend further to break up the community into areas bounded by thoroughfares, railways, street-car lines, bus lines, elevated lines, etc. The city becomes, thus, a network of intercrossing barriers defining the boundaries of areas each of which has its own peculiar characteristics. These characteristics act as a magnet in drawing those social types of people which are appropriate and repelling those

which do not fit. Thus there are family areas and non-family areas, areas of the rich and of the poor, racial areas, occupational areas, and cultural areas. Even the age and sex distribution varies for different areas.<sup>1</sup>

Systems of communication, the newspaper, the telephone, the telegraph, and the radio, also have a profound influence upon the growth of the city. They tend to counteract differentiation and segregation upon the basis of external characteristics, such as race, and substitute for these, or accentuate, the more subtle interests, such as aesthetic interests and philosophies of life.

The tendency for heavy manufacturing to locate at outlying points acts also as a force in the differentiation of areas. Colonies of workers tend to grow up about these plants. Retail stores and other small business ventures appear in these subcenters, and the same process of differentiation tends to be repeated about these centers as is characteristic of the city as a whole.

Thus in the growth of the city the communities become differentiated—first, in terms of structure which operates as a selective force in the distribution of population; second, in terms of institutions which come to serve the differentiated local groups. The result is to give to the city a wide diversity of cultural areas which mold even family life into a diversity of forms.

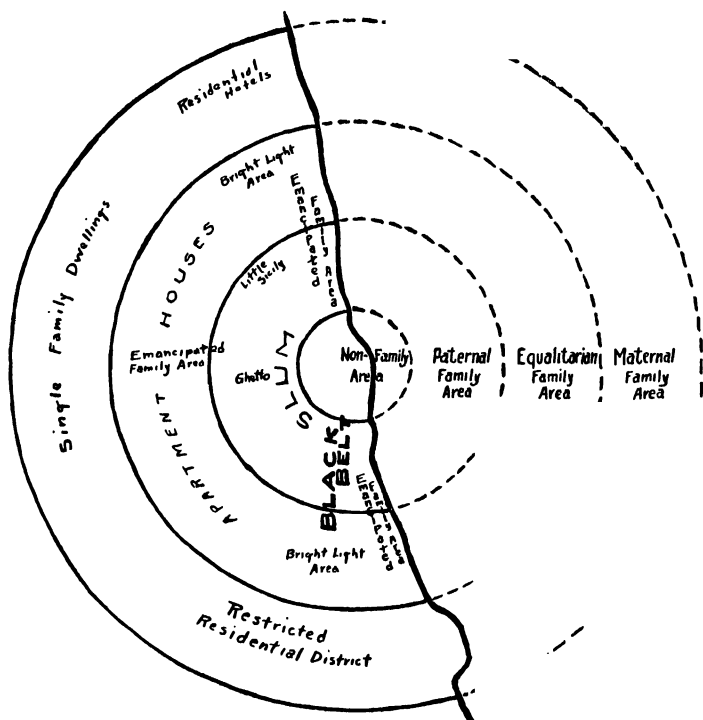
#### ECOLOGY OF FAMILY LIFE

Just as the process of expansion and differentiation of areas in the city may be represented by a series of concentric circles, so does the distribution of family areas tend to conform to such an ideal representation. This may be illus-

<sup>1</sup> See Park, "Sociology," pp. 9 ff., in Gee, *Research in the Social Sciences*.

trated with reference to Chicago in which five types of family areas have been discovered: (1) non-family areas,

CHART V  
FAMILY AREAS IN CHICAGO, 1920



(2) emancipated family areas, (3) paternal family areas, (4) equalitarian family areas, and (5) maternal family areas (see Chart V). Each of these, in turn, is closely related to the amount of family disorganization and to the form it takes.

The non-family areas are to be found in the center of the

city, in and adjoining the central business district—in Chicago, the Loop. They tend to be one-sex areas—predominantly male—such as Greektown, Chinatown, and Hobohemia.

The areas of the emancipated family are the districts of rooming-houses and kitchenette apartments and residential hotels. These areas attract the emancipated family because they offer the isolation from local primary contacts and freedom from group control upon which this type of family is based.<sup>1</sup> In the organization of the city these areas tend to be interstitial, following the lines of rapid transportation.

Paternal family areas are those of the workers, characteristic of the tenement areas and the immigrant colonies, such as the Ghetto and Little Sicily, where the husband rules the home. Low rents and a standard of life commensurate with the incomes of laborers and the culturally unadjusted make these areas the natural habitat of the working classes, whose conservatism fosters the paternal family pattern. Contacts in these sections of the city approach those characteristic of rural areas more closely than any of the other of the family areas.<sup>2</sup>

The equalitarian family areas are the residential districts wherein live the middle and professional classes. Residence within the community tends to extend over a considerable period of time in the interests of contacts with friends and relatives. Since there are children, though families tend to be small, this also makes for less movement in an effort to stabilize school contacts. Greater interest is therefore taken in the neighborhood institutions than is characteristic of the emancipated family.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 98–99.

<sup>2</sup> See above, pp. 96–97.

<sup>3</sup> See above, pp. 97–98.

The maternal family areas are those of the commuter, primarily the neighborhoods of the upper bourgeoisie. These outlying districts are characterized by single houses, typically bungalows, and large yards. Contacts in these areas are largely primary as far as the wife and children are concerned, though less so for the husband. Neighborhood opinion and conformity to the accepted patterns of social intercourse are rigidly held to. Family prestige is largely a matter of family connections and the type of home which is maintained. For many families in these areas "keeping up with the Joneses" furnishes an outlet for much energy and interest.<sup>1</sup>

How the amount and form of family disorganization are related to the type of family organization may be seen by comparison of Charts VI and VII with Chart V.<sup>2</sup> The highest rates of family disorganization tend to be found in the areas of the emancipated family, though the equalitarian family areas are not far behind. Family disintegration takes the form of divorce, chiefly, though mingled with some desertion and non-support.

Intermediate rates, on the other hand, tend to characterize the areas of the paternal family which are also the desertion areas of the city. Religious and social taboos against divorce tend to persist in these areas and so prevent a high rate of family disintegration, if not disorganization.

The lowest rates of family disorganization are to be found in the maternal family areas. These areas are marked by their conservatism and the control of the primary group. While these areas are relatively free from either divorce or desertion, when the family disintegrates it tends to culminate in divorce rather than in desertion.

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 97.

<sup>2</sup> For the data from which these charts were constructed see Table XXXIII in *Family Disorganization*, pp. 118-19.

# FAMILY DISORGANIZATION

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## CHART VI

AREAS OF FAMILY DISINTEGRATION IN CHICAGO, 1920

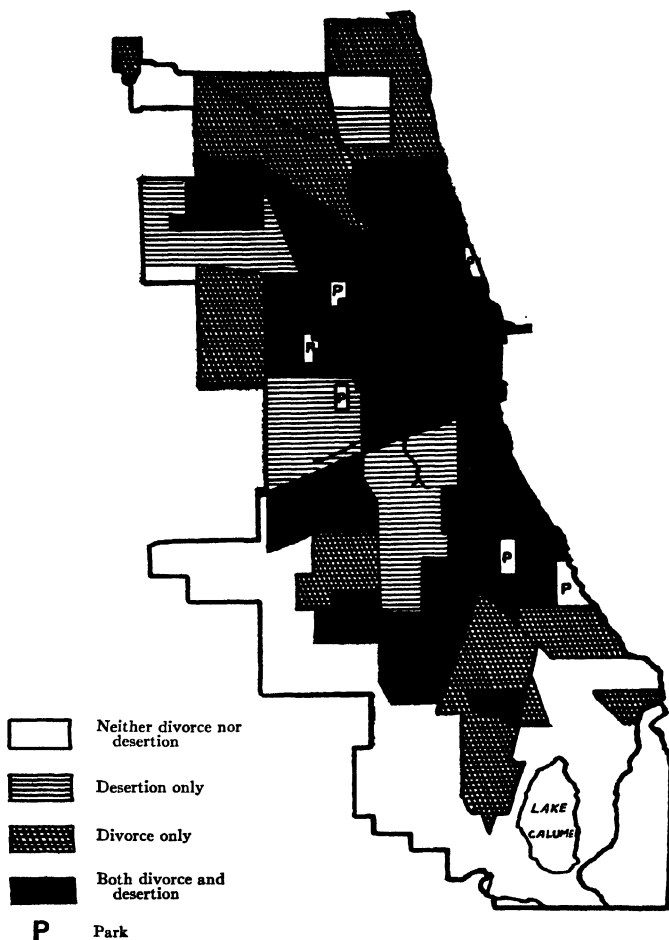
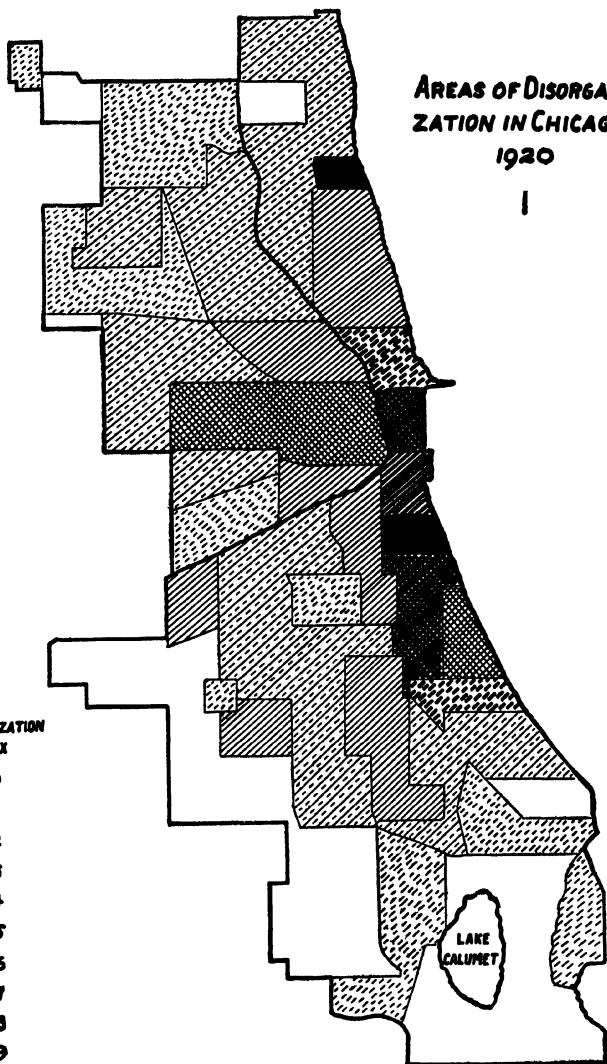




CHART VII

**AREAS OF DISORGANIZATION IN CHICAGO,  
1920**

I

**DISORGANIZATION  
INDEX**

These findings, accordingly, show an association between the ecological organization of the city and the distribution of family disorganization which suggests an explanation in terms of mobility. How far can it be said, therefore, that family disorganization is associated with such forces producing mobility as the expansion of industrial organization, the extension of money economy to an increasing number of the interests of life, the increase in communication, and the breakdown of neighborhood contacts with its accompanying disappearance of the restrictive force of neighborhood opinion?

#### MOBILITY AND CITY LIFE

It is a truism that the individual in the city is more free from the conventions and customs of his time than is his country cousin. In fact, the distinction between the country and the city may be stated in terms of this freedom from the control of the primary group. This freedom grows out of the multiplicity of contacts in city life, i.e., out of mobility.

The first effects of this multiplicity of contacts is to disorganize the individual by breaking down the intimacy of contacts with the primary groups upon which morality is based. Relations become casual and specialized, involving only a portion of the personality at a time. This externality of contacts makes it possible for the individual to determine his norms of conduct by passing from one group to another at will, participating now in the standards of one group, now in those of another, even though the several groups may hold to contradictory standards.

Mobility, therefore, implies something more than mere movement in space. It involves change, new experience, stimulation, new contacts, freedom from primary group con-

trol. In fact, when movement becomes regular and routine so that it introduces nothing more than rhythm in contacts and stimulations, it is no longer mobility. It is in movement in which there is uncertainty and adventure that attitudes become mutable and behavior flows into channels not previously determined by tradition and convention.<sup>1</sup>

Mobility may, as Professor Burgess has suggested, be measured either in terms of increase in contacts or in terms of changes in movement. Accordingly, he suggests per capita transportation rates, per capita receipts of letters, per capita telephone calls, land values, etc., as indexes of mobility since all reflect the number and variety of social stimulations.<sup>2</sup>

#### MOBILITY AND DIVORCE

If this increase in the number and variety of social stimulations involved in mobility is responsible for much of the disorganization of city life, is it not possible that family disorganization is likewise related to mobility? It was to test this hypothesis that a study was made to determine whether or not couples involved in divorce suits showed a history of more frequent change of residence than is normal for the social class of which they are a part.

The method used was to take one thousand divorce cases and trace back as far as possible the changes of address preceding the date of separation as indicated in the divorce complaint. Since the telephone directory provided the best source of such changes, this was used for both the divorce and the control groups. In this way the social class of both groups was held constant, as well as was the degree of accuracy in recording moves. The control group thus provided

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Park, Burgess, McKenzie, and Wirth, *op. cit.*, pp. 58-62.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 59-61.

a norm for telephone subscribers as a whole, whereas the divorce group represented a sample of the movement preceding the separation which culminated in divorce.<sup>1</sup> Any substantial difference between the frequency of change in address between the two groups would presumably show the relationship between mobility and divorce.

There are, of course, several methods by which movement may be measured within the limitations of the data to be secured from the telephone directory. The most simple method is that of counting the number of times a person or a family changes street address within the period covered by the telephone directory. This, however, would eliminate all cases in which only one address was found regardless of how long the residence might have been continued at the same place. This difficulty can be eliminated, however, by counting the number of addresses at which the family or person lived and the number of years covered by the record.

<sup>1</sup> The method of compiling these data was as follows: One thousand divorce cases in which the family was also a telephone subscriber were taken chronologically from the records of the Circuit Court of Cook County, Illinois, for the year 1919. Since not every couple securing a divorce had been previously a telephone subscriber this procedure involved checking up on considerably more than one thousand divorce cases. Nevertheless, this method has the redeeming feature of narrowing the range of the divorce group and thereby making it more homogeneous and therefore more comparable to the control group, both being telephone subscribers. Names of both the husband and wife were taken in each case, as well as their address at the time of separation, year of marriage, length of married life, length of time separated, number of children by age and sex, place of marriage, and the grounds for divorce. These data were of considerable help in checking upon the accuracy of identification in the telephone directory. Each family was then traced from the date of separation back through the years of married life, or that period of which they had been local telephone subscribers. For each divorce case a control case was taken by recording the name of a person following that of the family in the telephone directory who later became divorced, if that name were characteristic enough to make tracing it possible.

The ratio between these two numbers, then, would give one a measure of mobility.

Counting, then, the total number of both years and addresses covered by the record for each of the divorce cases, one obtains the results shown in Table XII. The total addresses in these cases is 1,910 and the total for the years covered is 3,448. The mean number of years per address is, accordingly, 1.81 years. For the control group, on the other hand, for which the total number of years covered is 5,450 and the total number of addresses is 1,928, the mean number of years per address is 2.83 years (see Table XIII). The mean number of years per address seems therefore to be about 56 per cent greater for the control group than for the divorce group.

To the person who is not statistically minded this difference in the mean number of years per address between the

If not, the next one, and so on. This name was then traced back through earlier directories until it disappeared. It is obvious that the control group so selected is not entirely a non-divorce group, nor necessarily entirely a family group. Some telephone subscribers in the control group may have been previously divorced and others may have been single persons. Since, however, residence telephones usually represent families, this would not introduce a high margin of error. Furthermore, it is highly probable that single persons move more frequently than families. Also, from the results of the divorce group one would anticipate that any persons in the control group who had been divorced anytime during the period in which their names appeared in the telephone directory would also show a higher rate of movement. The inclusion of both single persons and families involved in divorce in the control group would therefore tend to make the rate of movement somewhat higher than otherwise, and therefore somewhat closer to that of the divorce group, since this group was found to move more frequently. Any error in the results, accordingly, would tend in the direction of making the two groups appear more nearly alike than they are, thereby tending to minimize the relative mobility between families later broken by divorce and families in general.

divorce and the control groups is enough to convince him that the former group does not, on the whole, live as long at a place—therefore moves more often than is normal for the

TABLE XII  
YEARS' RESIDENCE OF 1,000 DIVORCE CASES IN TERMS OF  
STREET ADDRESSES

No. YEARS	TOTAL CASES	NUMBER OF ADDRESSES								TOTAL YEARS
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Total...	1,000	502	263	127	61	29	15	2	1	3,448
1.....	271	260	11	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	271
2.....	221	123	89	8	1	.....	.....	.....	.....	442
3.....	152	52	73	27	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	456
4.....	93	30	32	23	5	3	.....	.....	.....	372
5.....	71	13	25	18	9	6	.....	.....	.....	355
6.....	51	8	10	17	11	3	2	.....	.....	306
7.....	50	9	8	13	10	7	3	.....	.....	350
8.....	27	2	5	11	4	.....	5	.....	.....	216
9.....	21	2	4	4	7	1	1	2	.....	189
10.....	19	3	4	2	4	5	1	.....	.....	190
11.....	8	.....	1	3	2	1	1	.....	.....	88
12.....	7	.....	1	.....	2	2	1	.....	1	84
13.....	4	.....	.....	1	3	.....	.....	.....	.....	52
14.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
15.....	3	.....	.....	.....	1	1	1	.....	.....	45
16.....	2	.....	.....	.....	2	.....	.....	.....	.....	32
Total ad- dresses.	1,910	502	526	381	244	145	90	14	8	.....

social class to which it belongs. The statistician, however, knows it is not likely that if he tosses a penny a thousand times the head and the tail will come up five hundred times each, in spite of the fact that it would seem that the chances of throwing a head are exactly equal to those of throwing a tail. He knows, furthermore, that should he repeat his experiment of throwing the same penny a thousand

times it is very unlikely that he would get the identical results which he got the first time. Yet he knows that the

TABLE XIII

YEARS' RESIDENCE OF 1,000 CONTROL CASES IN TERMS OF  
STREET ADDRESSES

No. YEARS	TOTAL CASES	NUMBER OF ADDRESSES									TOTAL YEARS
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Total....	1,000	493	278	116	65	29	13	2	2	2	5,450
1.....	47	47	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	47
2.....	166	130	36	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	332
3.....	158	96	52	10	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	474
4.....	115	62	31	16	6	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	460
5.....	111	51	35	19	5	1	.....	.....	.....	.....	555
6.....	92	32	32	14	9	5	.....	.....	.....	.....	552
7.....	78	33	22	10	9	3	1	.....	.....	.....	546
8.....	54	19	17	12	3	3	.....	.....	.....	.....	432
9.....	51	13	18	11	2	4	3	.....	.....	.....	459
10.....	38	4	10	12	9	2	.....	1	.....	.....	380
11.....	30	4	9	2	9	3	2	.....	1	.....	330
12.....	12	1	2	1	4	3	.....	.....	1	.....	144
13.....	11	.....	1	1	2	3	3	.....	.....	1	143
14.....	11	.....	4	3	.....	1	3	.....	.....	.....	154
15.....	9	1	5	1	1	.....	.....	1	.....	.....	135
16.....	4	.....	2	2	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	64
17.....	4	.....	1	.....	2	.....	.....	.....	.....	1	68
18.....	5	.....	1	.....	2	1	1	.....	.....	.....	90
19.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
20.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
21.....	2	.....	.....	1	1	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	42
22.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
23.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
24.....	1	.....	.....	1	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	24
Total addresses	1,928	493	556	348	250	145	78	14	16	18	.....

similarity between his two sets of throws would be much greater than if each had only represented fifty throws instead of one thousand. And similarly he knows that should he increase each set of throws to a hundred thousand, his

results would be even more alike and even nearer the theoretical ratio of 50 to 50.

This difference between sets of throws the statistician calls chance fluctuation in the sample. This fluctuation becomes less and less as the sample becomes larger. But since in every statistical comparison the size of the group with which one is dealing is always limited, it is necessary to make allowance for such fluctuations as might easily occur by chance. If after making such allowance there is still some difference left, one may be reasonably sure that the study of a larger number of cases would only confirm what had already been found. One may speak of this allowance as the improbable error since the probabilities are slight that results equaling or exceeding this allowance would disappear if a much larger group of cases were studied.<sup>1</sup>

In the comparison of the mean years per address of the divorce and control groups, it is highly improbable that the study of a much larger group of both divorce and control cases would do anything other than confirm the striking difference of 1.02 years.<sup>2</sup> These results show, therefore, that mobility measured in this fashion is much higher for the divorce than for the control group.

<sup>1</sup> In standard statistical terminology the "improbable error" is 2.5757 standard errors, which is to say that the chances are 100 to 1 that a particular result which equals this amount could not have occurred as a chance fluctuation in the sample. As the observed results become greater than the "improbable error," the chances that they could have occurred as chance fluctuations diminish.

<sup>2</sup> The improbable error of the difference between the means of the divorce and control groups is 0.07 years. The observed difference is some twelve times this figure. The standard error of the difference between the means of the two groups has been determined by the use of the formula

$$\text{where } \sigma = \sqrt{\frac{1}{n} \left( \frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2} + \dots + \frac{1}{n_k} \right) \cdot \sum f x^2}$$



## AVERAGE YEARS PER COMMUNITY

The measurement of mobility in terms of the mean years per address, however, would be misleading if for one group it meant moving across the street, next door, or a block or two, and for the other group several blocks at least and often across the city. If the divorce group were found to confine their movements to the same neighborhood more than the control group, it might be contended that they were not, after all, necessarily more mobile than the control group when one took into account the extent, as well as the fact, of movement.

Calculation of the number of blocks involved in each move would, of course, be a huge task. Furthermore, once done such an index might be misleading since considerable distance in terms of blocks can be covered if one moves frequently enough within the same neighborhood without making any significant change in contacts. A simple device, therefore, for insuring that the influence of moves within the same general area be minimized is to determine the mean number of years each group remained within the same community.<sup>1</sup> The results of tabulating moves in terms of communities are to be found in Tables XIV and XV.

The difference in mean years per community address between the divorce and the control groups is 1.49 years, the mean for the control group being the larger. Even after making the necessary statistical allowance the difference is still considerable.<sup>2</sup> These results only confirm what was pre-

<sup>1</sup> The community boundaries used were those developed in a previous study, *Family Disorganization*. See chap. v in particular for a justification of the procedure used in determining boundaries.

<sup>2</sup> The improbable error for the difference between the two means is 0.08 years. The observed difference is some eighteen times this standard, making its occurrence by chance highly improbable.

vously discovered since the mean for the control group is 62 per cent greater than that for the divorce group as compared to 56 per cent where street addresses were used. This method, accordingly, indicates a slightly higher mobility for the

TABLE XIV

YEARS' RESIDENCE OF 1,000 DIVORCE CASES IN TERMS OF  
COMMUNITY ADDRESSES

NO. YEARS	TOTAL CASES	NUMBER OF COMMUNITIES					TOTAL YEARS
		1	2	3	4	5	
Total.....	1,000	672	235	76	12	5	3,448
1.....	271	266	5	.....	.....	.....	271
2.....	221	173	45	3	.....	.....	442
3.....	152	81	62	9	.....	.....	456
4.....	93	47	38	7	1	.....	372
5.....	71	35	23	12	1	.....	355
6.....	51	17	18	14	2	2	306
7.....	50	17	16	12	4	1	350
8.....	27	9	8	8	1	1	216
9.....	21	1	6	4	1	.....	189
10.....	19	9	5	4	1	.....	190
11.....	8	4	4	.....	.....	.....	88
12.....	7	3	2	1	.....	1	84
13.....	4	1	3	.....	.....	.....	52
14.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
15.....	3	.....	1	1	1	.....	45
16.....	2	.....	1	1	.....	.....	32
Total com- munities...	1,443	672	470	228	48	25	.....

divorce group in comparison with the control group than does the first method.

Measurement of mobility in terms of movement from one community to another assumes that such movements are of more significance than those within the same community. In so far as each community constitutes a homogeneous group, this would, of course, be true. Obviously, this situa-

tion is never fully realized in large cities, though each community tends to take on a characteristic code of behavior

TABLE XV  
YEARS' RESIDENCE OF 1,000 CONTROL CASES IN TERMS OF  
COMMUNITY ADDRESSES

No. YEARS	TOTAL CASES	NUMBER OF COMMUNITIES					TOTAL YEARS
		1	2	3	4	5	
Total.....	1,000	701	219	59	16	5	5,450
1.....	47	47	.....	.....	.....	.....	47
2.....	166	148	18	.....	.....	.....	332
3.....	158	133	21	4	.....	.....	474
4.....	115	88	22	5	.....	.....	460
5.....	111	78	26	6	1	.....	555
6.....	92	54	27	6	5	.....	552
7.....	78	54	18	5	1	.....	546
8.....	54	31	18	4	1	.....	432
9.....	51	28	15	6	.....	2	459
10.....	38	13	16	6	3	.....	380
11.....	30	9	12	7	.....	2	330
12.....	12	3	6	2	1	.....	144
13.....	11	3	4	1	3	.....	143
14.....	11	4	3	3	.....	1	154
15.....	9	4	4	1	.....	.....	135
16.....	4	2	2	.....	.....	.....	64
17.....	4	1	3	.....	.....	.....	68
18.....	5	1	1	2	1	.....	90
19.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
20.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
21.....	2	.....	1	1	.....	.....	42
22.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
23.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
24.....	1	.....	1	.....	.....	.....	24
Total communities..	1,443	672	470	228	48	25	.....

and so select out of the population those elements which are in sympathy with this code. And while it is possible for persons to move within a single community in such a way as to free themselves from the control of that group who knows them, such freedom is much more easily obtained by mov-

ing completely out of a particular community or neighborhood.

In every large city, however, there are communities in various parts of the city which are essentially alike. Movement from one community to another essentially like the first, therefore, would not constitute as great a degree of mobility as that to a community radically different, in spite of the fact that it would probably mean some change in primary-group contacts. From the standpoint of understanding what happens to the personality and his social adjustment when he moves from one community to another, it is essential to know to what extent that movement involves going to a more or less highly organized community.

#### MOVEMENT TO AREAS OF HIGHER OR LOWER DISORGANIZATION

It has already been suggested that the rate of family disintegration of a community is closely related to rate of social disorganization. It is possible, therefore, to construct an index of disorganization for each of the communities of Chicago using the scale indicated in Chart VII (see p. 192). These indexes of disorganization range from 0 to 9. The amount of disorganization represented in each move can be calculated, accordingly, by taking the difference between the indexes of the two communities involved.<sup>1</sup> If there was more than one move, of course, the final disorganization index for each case would be the total of the indexes for each move. The results obtained in this way are given in Table XVI.

Moves in which the disorganization indexes lie between

<sup>1</sup> Thus, if a family or person lived in Oakland, which has an index of disorganization of 7, and moved to Hyde Park, of which the index is 4, the index of movement or mobility would be  $-3$  for that case. If, instead, the movement has been from Hyde Park to Oakland, the index would be  $+3$ .

-8 and -1 represent movement to communities of higher organization than the community of origin. This type of movement is more characteristic of the control group than of the divorce group, whereas the opposite is true where movement is to communities of higher disorganization.<sup>1</sup> There is no substantial difference between the two groups, on the other hand, where movement does not involve any change in disorganization.

TABLE XVI

DISORGANIZATION INDEX	TOTAL CASES		GROUP			
	No.	Per Cent	Control		Divorce	
			No.	Per Cent	No.	Per Cent
Total.....	627	100	299	100	328	100
-8 to -1.....	271	43	147	49	124	38
0.....	185	30	86	29	99	30
+1 to +9.....	171	27	66	22	105	32

One may conclude, accordingly, that the divorce group tends to move more often into areas of higher disorganization than the control group, while the latter group tends to move more often into areas of lower disorganization. This, however, shows only the direction of movement and not the amount.

The relative amount of movement within each of the two

<sup>1</sup> The improbable errors of the differences in percentages between the divorce and control groups for each of the two disorganization-index ranges, -8 to -1 and +1 to +9, are 10 and 9 per cent, respectively; the observed differences, 11 and 10 per cent. The standard error of the difference between percentages has been determined by the use of the formula

directions, i.e., toward areas of lower disorganization and of higher disorganization, may be obtained by comparing the means of the divorce and control groups. The mean change in disorganization index, where movement is in the direction of lower disorganization, is 2.18 for the control group as compared to 3.04 for the divorce group. The difference between these two means is, accordingly, 0.86, which is still quite substantial after making the necessary statistical allowance for chance fluctuation.<sup>1</sup> Where there is movement in the direction of lower disorganization, then, the divorce group tends to move more radically in that direction than does the control group. Comparison of means where movement is toward areas of higher disorganization does not give results which are statistically reliable, though the mean for the divorce group is somewhat greater than for the control group.<sup>2</sup>

The conclusion to be drawn from this analysis is that while the divorce group tends to move more often in the direction of higher disorganization, the mean amount of mobility involved is about equal for both groups. On the other hand, while the control groups tend to move more often in the direction of lower disorganization than does the divorce group, the amount of mobility involved is not as great as for the divorce group. This seems to indicate that movement is, on the whole, more radical for the divorce than for the control group.

There seems to be little doubt, therefore, but that the

<sup>1</sup> The improbable error of the difference between these means is 0.56, considerably less than the observed difference.

<sup>2</sup> The means for the divorce and control groups are 3.0 and 2.54, respectively. The observed difference is 0.46—slightly less than two times the standard error. The probabilities are about 10 to 1 that this is not a chance result.

disorganization of the family and the mobility of city life are closely associated. With the breakdown in neighborhood control in the city, resulting from the constant movement from one social situation to another, the individual is freed from the usual social restraints which function so effectively in the country and upon which much of the stability of social organization in the past has been built. And while this may not in all instances result in the production of attitudes in conflict with group standards, it does facilitate the expression of such attitudes by breaking down the repressive and coercive control of the primary group.

#### SUGGESTED READINGS

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## CHAPTER X

### THE CHILD AND THE DISORGANIZATION OF THE FAMILY

Whether the child or the adults have the most to lose in the disorganization of the family belongs to that category of problems often facetiously referred to as academic. Nevertheless, the effects of the disorganization of the family upon the child is none the less intriguing as a subject for scientific analysis.

There are, of course, many ways in which the disorganization of the family is related to the life of the child. For convenience one may differentiate the following phases of the problem: (1) parent-child conflicts, (2) family disintegration and the child, (3) loss of parents, (4) domestic discord and the child, and (5) delinquent behavior. Each of these, with the exception of the third, concerns the interaction between the child and the parents where relations are strained and family life provides no longer that security which is essential to normal development of personality.

#### PARENT-CHILD CONFLICTS

Conflicts between child and parent seem to arise out of certain basic elements in the parent-child relationship. These elements have been described at length in the Freudian literature and may be summarized under two heads, the conflict between sexes and between generations.

According to the Freudian conception, antagonism instinctively arises between father and son, mother and daugh-



ter. Which is to say that fathers generally prefer female children whereas mothers prefer male offspring. These sets of preferential attitudes have been called, respectively, the Electra and Oedipus complexes. Out of these preferential situations the attitudes of antagonism naturally arise, owing to the identification between the child and parent of the same sex. Both father and son see in each other rivals for the affection of the mother, whereas both mother and daughter are jealous of the attentions of the father.<sup>1</sup>

Attitudes of hatred and jealousy are not, of course, the only ones present. It is quite as natural for the parent to experience the attitudes of love and solicitude toward the helpless infant, regardless of sex, and to wish to provide for its comfort. This the Freudians explain in terms of the ambivalence of emotions by which it is possible to take contradictory attitudes at alternate times or at the same time toward an object of attention and interest. The parent both loves and hates the child—loves him because he sees in him a projection of his own ego, and hates him because the child is his most dangerous rival for the affections of his mate.

The ambivalent attitudes of the parents have their counterpart in the attitudes of the child. The preferential treatment of the parents tends to be reciprocated by the child, resulting in the parental preferences already indicated with the corresponding contradictory attitudes.

This conflict growing out of the basic heterosexual make-up of the individual is further accentuated in later life by the superimposition of another conflict pattern, namely, that between generations. Puberty initiates a rapid growth of the child both mentally and physically. In physical appearance and strength he becomes either equal or superior

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Flügel, *The Psycho-Analytic Study of the Family*, pp. 6-20.

to the parent of his own sex. He loses the feeling of awe with reference to his parents which he had felt when he was physically inferior. He tends, therefore, to chafe under the restrictions of his childhood, unless considerable adjustment has been made without resistance on the part of the parents.

In mental ability the child likewise tends following puberty to become rapidly superior to his parents. His knowledge is often, of course, idealistic and much less adapted to the practical demands of life than he himself thinks. The validity of the practical knowledge of his parents, however, is often diminished by their deep-set prejudices, their preoccupation with the affairs of everyday life, their conservatism, and their skepticism. Furthermore, much of the knowledge gained in earlier schooling has been forgotten, leaving them a poor match for the erudition of their children.

But it is not alone the envy of the superiority of the child which makes for conflict between the generations. Habits of thought and of action, developed when the child was more or less helpless, persist in spite of the intellectual realization that they are no longer appropriate. Furthermore, recognition of maturity implies not only that the parent is himself aging, but that shortly he will no longer play the important rôle in the life of the child which has been his but will be supplanted by others. The whole situation is full of symbolic prophecy of the future which the parent wishes to escape because of the need for reorganization of his own personality.<sup>1</sup>

But since it is a biological necessity that children receive care while they are young which later they will not need, and since their life-span goes beyond that of their parents,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 156-68.

it is necessary that they develop such independence of action as is required of adults. This change implies a change in relations between the parent and the child from dependence to independence and often to dependence of the parents upon the child. In the transition from one form of accommodation to another some conflict is inevitable.

Parent-child conflict is not to be looked upon necessarily as abnormal. It is only when this conflict becomes accentuated beyond the needs required for providing the child with the appropriate setting for development of independence of action that such conflict is to be considered undesirable.

Perhaps the most common way the parent solves this tendency toward conflict is through identification of himself with the lives of his children. In this way he is able to compensate for his own diminishing powers and to achieve immortality for himself through the lives of succeeding generations. Through this process the parent is able to achieve pleasures and successes which have not been his. The child is no longer simply an extension of his ego, but the parent is, instead, a part of the child with whom he identifies himself.

Identification, however, is rarely complete and is more generally mixed with envy. This is particularly true where the child is of the same sex. Furthermore, identification is more likely to characterize relations with the community, whereas within the intimacy of the family there is considerable envy unless the child continues subordinate to the parent. A father, for example, will get considerable satisfaction out of the successful business deals of his daughter only to refuse to take her advice concerning similar ventures of his own.

## DISORGANIZATION OF PARENT-CHILD RELATIONS

When parent-child conflicts become so intense that they threaten to disrupt the relations between parent and child, they constitute a part of the disorganization of the family. The amount of conflict which may be considered normal is, of course, a varying amount, beginning mildly in the early years of the child (at least by the time he starts to school), increasing slowly until puberty, then making more rapid increase until marriage, after which a diminishing trend sets in, owing to the lessening of the number of contacts.

Antagonisms threatening to disrupt the parent-child relationship may be of long standing or may develop out of crises in the life-cycle. One of the most common of these antagonisms is that in which the child dislikes one parent in comparison to the other. While it is true that these dislikes tend to be determined to some extent by the natural tendency for bonds of affection to develop between parent and child of the same sex, this is not always the case. A daughter, for example, may dislike her father very much while she may be quite fond of her mother. It is not always safe in such situations, however, to judge likes and dislikes upon the basis of surface indications. The daughter who professes dislike for her father may really be very fond of him, trying constantly to win his approval and admiration, but, failing to receive what she feels is due her, cover up her chagrin by professing intense dislike.

Dislike of one parent in comparison to the other develops out of a wide variety of circumstances, in most of which there is some feeling of mistreatment. The child born shortly after the marriage of the parents may feel that he was unwanted by either or both parents. If conception occurred prior to marriage the situation is accentuated. Preferential

treatment of children gives rise to feelings of mistreatment. Birth of another child into the family gives rise to resentment and jealousy of the attentions given the newcomer by the mother. Constant comparison of the child's accomplishments with those of more capable brothers or sisters leads the less able child to feel that he is being "picked on." Out of these circumstances develop dislikes which mature into hatreds for the parent and color all of the relations between the parent and child.

A closely related type of antagonism is that which takes the form of the adopted-child complex in which the child doubts that his parents are his own. What appear to be slights on the part of the parents puzzle the child until he finally hits upon the solution that he is adopted. Later knowledge may convince him that his conclusion was erroneous but fail to change substantially his attitudes toward his parents.

Projection of parental ambitions upon the child often leads, likewise, to antagonisms of long standing. Ambitions unrealized are projected upon the child without regard to his qualifications. In the face of lack of interest or failure to achieve expectations, the child develops antagonism as a defense mechanism against the projected ambition.

Out of these antagonisms develop negativistic behavior on the part of the child and a revolt against authority. Everything that is forbidden becomes the more attractive. The child works out ways of outwitting the parent. Obedience to the commands of the parents is purchased at the exorbitant price of "getting even sometime." The parent looks upon the child as unappreciative and unresponsive. The child completes the vicious circle by charging the parent with lack of understanding and sympathy.

## CRISES AND PARENT-CHILD CONFLICTS

Conflicts may develop between parent and child out of any of the crises of life. The more common crises, however, are death, marriage, divorce, and puberty. Divorce may be neglected for the moment in favor of the other three crises.

Puberty, because it initiates a period of rapid development of the individual, is pregnant with possibilities of conflict between child and parent. Parental control, unless relaxed from the more strict regimen of earlier years, gives rise to antagonisms between parent and child. This is particularly true where one parent is less strict than the other, or where privileges are afforded the older children and denied the younger.

With the increasing maturity following puberty it is not uncommon for differential attitudes to develop on the part of the two parents. One comes to recognize the maturity of the child and consults him about many matters, whereas the other still looks upon the child as lacking in sound judgment and reasoning. The child resents the fact that one parent will not grant him the rôle played in the community and confirmed by the other parent.

Both parents may, of course, fail to recognize the maturity of the child, in which case the antagonism is more sporadic in its development, though none the less violent when it reaches the explosive stage. In fact, this seems to be generally true of all the antagonisms between parents and child; they may involve one or both parents, but if both, the child tends to vacillate in his own position until he reaches the climax where parental approval is no longer as important as that of another group.

Death gives rise to problems in the adjustment between parent and child because it portends an instability in the

conduct of the remaining parent. The age of the child is, of course, an important factor since very young children see less portent of change in parent-child relations. Remarriage, however, even where there are young children, often produces antagonisms. Should the step-parent be disliked for any reason, the child tends to resent the fact that his own parent has brought in another to take the place of the departed one.

Again, death may result in placement of the child in a foster-home, an orphanage, or with members of the larger family. This the child, if unhappy, may resent, and holding the parent responsible develop considerable antagonism toward him. Or, what not uncommonly occurs where the person who dies is the father, the mother turns to members of the larger family for advice in the management of affairs which previously fell to her husband. The fairly mature child tends to resent this "interference" on the part of the larger family group.

Marriage is likewise a fertile source of conflict between parent and child. This is especially true where either or both parents have exercised a strong influence upon the conduct of the child and wish to continue to do so. Accordingly, the parent opposes marriage and at first tries to forestall the event by depreciating the qualities of candidates. Failing in this, the parent tries to determine the choice, either in the interest of realizing personal ambitions or of securing a person who will not threaten his continued control. The child rebels at this dominance on the part of the parent, even though it may not represent any greater control than that in which he had acquiesced previously, but it is directed into a new channel and one which is socially supposed to be free from parental interference.

Again, the attitudes of the parents differ, depending upon the sex of the child. If the child is a daughter, the father may see in the prospective son-in-law a rival for the affections of the girl who tends to symbolize to him his own wife when she was younger and more attractive. The mother, on the other hand, looks upon the situation somewhat differently, unless by projection she sees the possibility of realizing her own unrealized marriage ambitions. To her the marriage of the daughter marks the end of the reign of the most formidable rival for the affections and attention of her husband.

Should the child be a son, on the other hand, the situation is somewhat reversed. The mother looks upon the prospective daughter-in-law as a rival for the affections of her son, whereas the father shows little concern except as far as he may anticipate some recouping of his earlier unchallenged rôle of chief recipient of his wife's affections.

Parent-child conflicts tend in some respects to be accentuated where there are few children, while in others there seems to be little difference. In larger families the refusal to admit the maturity of the child tends to apply only to the youngest. Opposition to marriage, also, tends to apply more often to the youngest. Resentment at what is felt to represent mistreatment, on the other hand, is rather infrequent where there is but one child and seems to be quite as common to large as to small families. Resentment of the child at what seems to be excessive discipline and control on the part of one or both parents is probably more frequent in small families, where attention to the child's activities is less divided. Yet in large families, since some of the children may become identified with one side of a parent-child con-



flict and others with the other side, the antagonism is intensified.

#### DOMESTIC DISCORD AND THE CHILD

Up to the present no attention has been given to what happens when there is or has been conflict between the parents themselves, and how this affects the emotional life of the child and the development of his personality. Then there is the disorganization of the family owing to the death of one or both parents, which is not, however, of as great importance from the standpoint of the child since the culture of most peoples is better adjusted to the occurrences of such situations.

Since family disintegration, however, is always the climax or finale of family disorganization, and since the family broken by the death in so far as it creates attitudes of conflict in the child is not so different from family disintegration, one may neglect these more restricted forms of family disorganization for that of domestic discord.

All the tensions arising in the life of the child may be found in an aggravated form in domestic-discord situations. Feelings of inferiority, for example, are even stronger where conflict between parents is known in the community than if one parent were divorced, deserted, or dead. The constant reminder that the family relationship is fragile is even more disorganizing than a definite break, since no solution for the conflict situation can be achieved on either a rational or a non-rational basis.

It is in situations of domestic discord, accordingly, that one finds all the tensions epitomized which tend to produce emotional conflict, maladjusted individuals, misdirected energies. Many children are handicapped because of low economic status, ignorance, unfortunate parental guidance, etc.

But the child in a family where there is constant open conflict between parents is doubly handicapped by the instability of his family environment and the uncertainty which it creates in his community relations.

Conflict between parents and child, normally found in family relations, is aggravated by domestic discord between parents. No child can develop normally in a family situation surcharged with tension between parents. Even though the parents do all in their power to conceal their conflicts from their children, minimal expressions, incipient coldness and reserve, belie all attempts to hide the strained relations, and therefore react upon the child.

Attitudes of favoritism, also, tend to be more apparent in domestic-discord cases. It is, perhaps, quite normal for fathers to prefer daughters and for mothers to prefer sons, but when in domestic-discord cases this becomes exaggerated to the extent of turning to the child for the response which would normally come from the other partner in marriage, the disorganizing effects upon the child become felt.

#### VARIETIES OF EMOTIONAL MALADJUSTMENT

There are many varieties of ways in which domestic discord affects the emotional life of the child. In fact, it is probably not far from the truth to say that every phase of the emotional life of the child may be affected by domestic discord, depending of course upon the form which the conflict takes.

It is not uncommon to find one parent reacting toward his child in terms of certain traits identified with the other parent. A mother, for example, sees in her son the same care-free attitudes which she associates with her husband. The result is that she tries to correct these attitudes by constant

reprimands, references to them, etc., until the son eventually takes the same attitude toward her as does his father. Or, instead of trying to change the attitudes of the child, she may simply show hostility or indifference to his interests and so create in the child an attitude that he is being abused and neglected. In either case the conflict in the child is often quite acute. It is out of situations of this sort that attitudes of illegitimacy and adoption develop.

Or under other circumstances, this identification with the traits of the other parent may be in terms of past conduct and lead to the superimposition, so to speak, of the same rôle upon the child. Thus a father whose wife before her marriage had had relations with other men for which he had, he said, forgiven her, sees in the fondness for silk lingerie and fine clothes on the part of his daughter evidence of tendencies toward sexual delinquency. The result is that he constantly reminds her that she will undoubtedly be like her mother until she feels that no other rôle is possible, or even tolerable, in the face of her father's constant nagging.

One child, for example, in telling of his earlier experiences where there was conflict between parents, said he always felt mistreated by his parents, particularly by his father. Neighbors often heard his father whip him and remarked: "It couldn't be possible that a father would treat his child that way." He got the idea, accordingly, that he might not belong to his father, and often asked his mother, "Is he really my father?"

Thus, whether identification of the child with the other parent leads to neglect, to antagonism, or to undue solicitude and discipline, the attitudes of the child tend to be colored with feelings of mistreatment.

Sexual conflict between husband and wife is pregnant with

possibilities of emotional tensions in the life of the child. Because of the tendency for aversions toward sex relations to become attached to sex in general, such conflict often produces a high degree of reticence on the part of the wife and mother. The child, accordingly, grows up without sex instruction and tends to develop undue preoccupation and unsatisfied curiosity with reference to sex. Or, again, if the child is a girl, the mother may instil into her the idea that all men are brutes, that marriage is something to be avoided—an attitude which comes into conflict with the natural tendency to seek the attentions of the other sex. Some mothers, in fact, have been known to instil in their daughters hatred and fear toward their own fathers.

Describing her home life, which was unhappy, one young girl said: "I had a miserable life—I felt sorry for my mother. They never separated but they never got along. My mother was everything to me. I blamed my father. I decided that all men were no good. Because of my father I never cared to get married. I know that no man could make me happy."

Attitudes of infidelity of one parent toward the other likewise give rise to emotional conflict in the child, resulting either in attitudes of fear and aversion for members of the opposite sex, or to impulses of experimentation and adventure in this dangerous realm.

Domestic discord sometimes finds its most pronounced overt expression in quarrels between parents over the discipline of the children. This situation tends to lead either to lack of discipline or to unregulated and uncontrolled attempts at discipline. In either case each quarrel gives rise to an intense emotional situation in which, if the child is punished or disciplined in any way, he feels that he is being treated unfairly. Or, if no disciplinary action develops out

of these conflicts, the child often becomes an opportunist, manipulating the stage, so to speak, as a way of getting what he wants. A man, for example, who was having conflict with his wife said: "I like the children, but when they grow up they will forget me. As long as I give them money I am a good idea—they are just like their mother!"

Competition between parents for the affections of their children may be said, perhaps, to be a normal situation. In domestic discord cases, however, this competition becomes exaggerated to the extent of producing severe tensions in the emotional life of the child. In some cases the response of the child takes the form of egotism, especially where each parent tries to outdo the other in winning his allegiance. This type of response is probably more characteristic of the only child and of the youngest child. Where there is more than one child it tends to lead to taking sides and so producing intense conflict and hatred between the children themselves. Or, again, it may lead to feelings of discrimination, or to the development of complete emotional dependence upon one parent which will later block all attempts to have any independent existence. Such situations as the latter often develop into what are sometimes called the Oedipus and Electra complexes, preventing successful marriages, separate interests, or individual development.

In fact, the projection of unsuccessful-marriage attitudes upon the child is perhaps one of the most common consequences of domestic discord. It is not unusual, for example, to find a mother persuading a daughter not to marry for fear that she in turn will have the same difficulty with her husband. If the daughter refuses to be dissuaded, she often enters marriage in a highly skeptical frame of mind and finds what she was promised. Or, following the advice of

her mother, she later resents the interference and develops attitudes of disillusionment and frustration. Another result of this sort of transfer leads to intense dislike on the part of the child for the other parent, so that contacts with that parent are avoided. This situation was described by one man as follows: "She poisoned the children's minds against me. Even the youngest one runs away from me."

In extreme cases this dislike for one parent develops to such an extent that the individual becomes sadistic in his attitudes toward all persons of the opposite sex. Outside marriage this often takes the form of encouraging attentions of members of the opposite sex, only to place them in embarrassing positions, drop them, or otherwise torture them. In marriage relations the possibilities of inflicting pain are seized upon at every opportunity. These sadistic tendencies find expression in a variety of ways, such as making the other person feel inferior in the presence of friends by calling attention to his deficiencies, withholding sex relations, mistreatment of the other's favorite child, etc.

Another phase of the projection of unsuccessful-marriage attitudes upon the child may be seen in cases where domestic discord appears in successive generations. In one case, for example, in which conflict between parents continued over a long period of years, three of four daughters are married and having trouble similar to that of their parents. This tendency is further revealed in a large group of domestic-discord cases recently studied by the writer in which evidence of domestic discord involving other members of the immediate family was found in 25 per cent of the cases.

It is not unusual in cases of domestic discord to find children losing respect for one or both parents. The effect of this situation upon the discipline of the children is obvious, but

it also has other far-reaching effects. One mother, for example, in explaining the attitude of the children toward her husband with whom she was having difficulty, said: "The children like him but they say, 'Mamma, don't worry about your sweetheart. When we grow up, we'll take care of you.' They always call their father 'Mother's sweetheart.' " Children under these circumstances often feel that somehow they have been unfortunate in having such parents—they lose their own self-respect and feel inferior to their playmates.

Finally, there is that variety of domestic discord growing out of personal disorganization of one or both parents. In many of these situations the child also becomes highly disorganized. He tends to develop the same disorganizing trends as are found in the disorganized parent. It is not unusual, for example, to find a child developing the same neurotic mechanism of escape as exhibited by his parent. This may take the form of complaints of illness, nervousness, fainting spells, etc. In other situations, especially those in which one parent feels unfortunate in being unable to achieve his ambitions, these are projected upon the child. And while this occurs in many cases where domestic discord is not apparent, the drive toward coercing the child to realize unfulfilled ambitions is even greater and more determined where marriage is unsuccessful.

#### FAMILY DISORGANIZATION AND DELINQUENCY

Another way in which family disorganization is supposed to be related to the conduct of the child is its effect upon delinquency. It is, of course, true that all delinquency cannot be thought of as developing out of the disorganization of the family since conformance to the patterns of conduct prevalent in the family group itself may bring the child

into conflict with the community. This is especially true among antisocial classes whose behavior in general is below the standard of the larger community. Furthermore, the conduct of the child in his family contacts may be quite in conformity with the norms of the community reflected in the patterns of the family, and yet in other contacts outside the family the child may act at variance with community norms. Delinquency of this sort is therefore outside the province of this discussion.

Parent-child conflicts may easily lead the child into delinquent behavior by making his position in the family so precarious that he goes outside the family for encouragement, attention, and affection. This may, and often does, mean affiliation with a delinquent group. If the child is a boy he finds that he can get recognition by being more daring than the other members of his gang. The girl, on the other hand, finds sex delinquency an easy short-cut to the affection which she misses at home.

Furthermore, the attitude of revolt toward the parent is often carried over to school-teachers, or to anyone else in authority. The individual becomes absorbed, therefore, in outwitting everyone to whom he is supposed to be subordinate. All codes of conduct are, accordingly, all the more to be broken since they have become identified with the commands of the disliked and hated parent. Sadistic satisfaction is also to be gained by seeing the disturbed attitudes of the hated parent. With this is often mingled the satisfaction he obtains in the added attention received from the disliked parent whose affection and solicitude he craves.

Parent-child conflicts are further complicated by domestic discord between the parents. It is, perhaps, in this way that delinquent behavior is most closely related to domestic



discord. Ambiguity of discipline leads easily to delinquency, either because one parent is always ready to defend the child no matter what he does or because of the tendency for the development of negativistic responses.

Where one parent protects the child from the discipline of the other, he tends to find that anything which he may do will be condoned if he can so manipulate the stage as to get the disliked parent to criticize and attempt to discipline him, since he can depend on the negative response of the favorite parent. In this way he not only fails to receive training in conduct, but he also becomes contemptuous of all control, whether exercised on the part of his parents or others. His respect for the parent who champions him may be no greater than for the parent against whose discipline he rebels. A premium is thus placed upon all conduct which meets the condemnation of the representatives of society.

The disintegration of the family provides further situations in which delinquent behavior may arise, the most common being those in which one parent is absent, whether as the result of death, separation, or divorce. While the absent member is more often the father than the mother, especially where separation and divorce are the causes, this phase of the situation does not seem to be the most important. The significant elements are that contacts with adults tend to be too restricted to one sex, and that the child feels himself inferior to other children who can claim the possession of two parents. Delinquency, accordingly, often takes the form of compensation for the absence of heterosexual contacts and for feelings of social inferiority.<sup>1</sup> The boy, for

<sup>1</sup> It should be kept in mind, of course, that other individuals may serve as parent-substitutes and so prevent, or modify, the rôle of the child in the family, thus counteracting the trends toward delinquency. The most common substitutes are older children, or relatives who live with the family.

example, who grows up without a father may find himself lacking in masculinity in comparison with other boys. Where the absent parent is the mother, the boy may still lack a masculine pattern, owing to the father's rôle having been modified by the addition of the rôle of the mother. Gang exploits, accordingly, constitute a masculine protest against a family life which furnished for the boy no adequate pattern of masculinity.<sup>1</sup>

Gang exploits also provide an avenue of compensation for feelings of social inferiority, arising out of having only one parent. This feeling of inferiority is accentuated where the conduct of the absent parent has been the subject of local gossip. Neither is it essentially different in cases in which the condemned parent is present in the family. The son of a defective or degenerate parent, for example, may feel the need for some means by which he can raise his status in the boy group. Delinquency provides a ready means of acquiring status.

Where the child is a girl, the situation is not entirely changed from that in the case of the boy, though the resulting conduct is different. Sexual delinquency furnishes the most common outlet for the girl, whether as compensation for the lack of affection and feeling of inferiority in the family, or because these experiences have little meaning, other than as providing a ready source of excitement, interesting adventures, or money for clothes. Lack of affection and feelings of inferiority are probably more commonly experienced where the missing parent is the mother, whereas deficiency in heterosexual emotions is more likely to be found where it is the father who is absent.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Dell, *Love in the Machine Age*, pp. 209-24.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 224 ff.

Delinquency also may result from admiration for the absent parent. Under these circumstances the child attempts to reproduce the behavior of the parent who is no longer in the home, and, since his knowledge is likely to be colored by what has been told by the other parent, it is often along delinquent lines. Thus a girl brought up by her father who divorced her mother because of adultery becomes sexually delinquent.

Delinquent behavior, in so far as it is related to family disorganization, is, accordingly, chiefly the outgrowth of mental conflicts which arise where family rôles are ambiguous. The essential likeness in the conduct of the child, regardless of what forms family disorganization takes, is due to the uncertainty of the rôle of the child in the family and the absence of elements which would normally be expected. And while without the complicating factor of family disorganization the child may still fail to receive that integration of personality which the family normally provides, the addition of this factor accentuates the situation, providing greater opportunities for the disorganization of personality.

Thus a study of the rôle of the child in families where there is disorganization seems to indicate the need for more thorough attention to the family situation, and especially to the relations between husband and wife, in the understanding of personality development. This calls for a broader point of view, on the one hand, and for more concentrated attention upon the family situation, on the other. It also indicates the need for more attention to the social factors, and a skeptical attitude toward the widespread theory of the fixity and specific nature of heredity.

Such an approach would emphasize the rôle of the individual in the group—the first definition of personality being

in the family. Many of the maladjustments in personality development have their origin in the crises involved in adjusting one's self to a rôle in the larger group which is different from that in the family. Family disorganization adds to the crisis by complicating the family situation so that the techniques for adjustment normally provided by the family are either completely or partially lacking.

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## CHAPTER XI

### THE TREATMENT OF DOMESTIC DISCORD

Reflection upon domestic discord seems always to have led to some attempt to adjust the conflict between husband and wife. At first these attempts were sporadic and unorganized, reflecting the concern of the family group for its own welfare. Neighbors and friends might offer suggestions, but these were of secondary importance to the therapeutic plans of the larger family. Later, however, as domestic discord came to be looked upon as a social problem, groups and individuals whose interests were more of a professional nature began to formulate programs of treatment.

From the standpoint of these more disinterested groups one can differentiate two angles of approach to the treatment of domestic discord. These may be called (1) social reform and (2) social therapy. Each is related to a different analytical conception of the nature of domestic discord, though they are not mutually exclusive.

Social reform considers domestic discord as a form of social maladjustment. Treatment from this point of view, therefore, is directed toward mass changes in the direction considered desirable. These changes may be brought about by education, propaganda, and the like, and particularly by legislation. Social reform assumes, accordingly, that domestic discord can be treated on a large scale through the formulation of standards of conduct by either an educational or a legislative process. The problem is to find the right formulation and then to put it into practice.

Social therapy, on the other hand, looks upon domestic discord as a form of personal maladjustment. Treatment is therefore directed toward the individual upon the assumption that some change is needed in his behavior with reference to his marriage partner. The approach of the social therapist is in terms of the individual, or at most the marriage group.

Social therapy, accordingly, has as its aim the discovery and application of treatment methods to cases of domestic discord in such a way as to bring about adjustment in the relations between husband and wife. This goal is to be achieved by bringing the behavior of one or both persons to conform to certain standards which are considered essential for marital felicity. How this is to be accomplished varies with each of the different types of approach: (1) religious, (2) legal, and (3) family case-work.

The essence of the religious approach is the assumption that sin is the primary factor in thwarting the desires of individuals for marital happiness. Accordingly, the treatment of domestic discord consists either in pointing out to individuals how they have sinned or in attempting to direct their interests into transcendental channels.

Where the characterization of the situation is in terms of sin, the formula is, of course, repentance. If both persons do not equally respond to treatment, the one who does is admonished to overlook the sins of the other and to pray that he will change, i.e., recognize his sins and repent. The function of the social therapist is to point out the features in the situation which come under the category of sin, and by exhortation to get the individuals to accept his characterization and plan of treatment.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Mowrer, *Family Disorganization*, pp. 278-80.

The "transcendental" technique consists in showing either or both husband and wife the relative unimportance of domestic felicity in comparison with other things. Conflict, therefore, is to be overlooked in the interest of achieving other goals. This technique is particularly well illustrated in the Catholic attitude of marriage as a sacrament, the primary purpose of which is to provide souls for heaven.

The legal approach is in terms of contractual rights. This covers chiefly two phases of relationship, the physical and the economic. Since the law forbids overt acts of cruelty and guarantees the support of the wife and children by the husband, treatment consists in enforcing the law in cases of infraction. The method is, of course, punishment of the guilty person upon the theory that the discomforts involved will prevent recurrence of the offense.

To facilitate the operation of the legal techniques, special courts have often been organized, especially for the prosecution of non-support cases. In connection with such courts there is often to be found a department for the settling of cases without the formality of a court order. The form of treatment is somewhat changed through the functioning of this department since the individual is not punished but is told that he is in danger of being punished. This extra-legal procedure, accordingly, gets its acceptance from the fact that if orders are not obeyed the case can be taken into court. The essence of the legal technique is, therefore, the modification of conduct through the use of punishment either in anticipation or in realization.<sup>1</sup>

#### THE CASE-WORK APPROACH TO TREATMENT

The techniques of treatment from the religious and legal approaches are relatively simple in character, as has already

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Mowrer, *Family Disorganization*, pp. 271-74.

been seen. Furthermore, the general nature of these approaches is widely understood. It is not necessary, therefore, to go into such detail with respect to these approaches as is required in the case of family case-work.

Family case-work, while its beginnings were very simple, has of recent years developed an elaborate system of techniques for the treatment of domestic discord. But in addition to its techniques of treatment, family case-work has also developed diagnostic techniques, which, if not a part of treatment, are at least preliminary thereto and therefore of great importance in the treatment process.

Diagnosis from the standpoint of the religious and legal approaches is a relatively simple procedure which consists of determining whether or not, and in what respect, there has been any infraction of the religious code or the legal code, respectively. In family case-work, however, diagnosis has come to involve getting at much more about the situation needing treatment than simply a categorical characterization. The case-worker diagnostician wants to know also what were the forces producing the situation in order that she may more intelligently plan and carry through her treatment.

Since the development of diagnostic techniques in domestic-discord problems is part and parcel to that with regard to other problems in family case-work, it is necessary to review a bit the more recent history of family case-work. In this review it is not necessary to go back to the beginnings of social work, but only to the reorganization which developed out of the charity-organization movement.

#### DEVELOPMENT OF FAMILY CASE-WORK<sup>1</sup>

The early records of professional family case-work agencies reveal their primary purpose as that of giving material

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Mowrer, *Domestic Discord*, pp. 34-37.



relief to needy families. Diagnosis required only a simple investigation to assure the agency that the request was worthy of consideration. The treatment consisted primarily in giving economic assistance either in cash or in kind. This was supplemented by friendly visiting, the nature of which the records do not reveal.

A little later the standard family budget was devised to measure the legitimacy of the request for aid. The investigative technique was enlarged upon in the drive toward determining to what degree the family budget fell below the minimum standard of living. But since conditions are always changing, this entailed constant reinvestigation. The technique of family case-work thus became that necessary for making the required investigations. By an easy extension medical services were added, the family case-worker serving as a connecting link between the individual and the agency giving free medical services. Her technique, developed in handling relief problems, served very well in this extension into the medical field, especially so long as its purpose was simply to determine the possibility of a need for medical attention and required the obtaining of no facts pertinent to medical diagnosis.

A further stage in the development of diagnosis in family case-work was reached when the task of the worker became that of determining what problems were presented in each case. Mental and conduct problems were added to those already recognized, viz., economic and medical. It was the worker's function to determine by investigation of a particular complaint the several problems represented in each case, many of which might not be apparent on the surface. The point of entrée continued, however, to be the low economic status of the family, whether in terms of possible need for

economic assistance or in terms of inability to purchase the services required. The verification technique developed in handling relief problems, accordingly, continued to play a dominating rôle in the diagnostic efforts of case-workers.

With the multiplication of specialized agencies to which cases might be referred, treatment came more and more to be a matter for other agencies. This, perhaps, accounts for the fact that the chief emphasis in family case-work continued so long upon diagnosis rather than upon treatment, except in so far as the reference of cases to other agencies constituted treatment. There is even yet no standard treatise, for example, upon social treatment comparable to that of Miss Richmond's on social diagnosis, though techniques have developed for the treatment of many problems.

Thus so long as treatment in family case-work was restricted to the treatment of economic problems and the reference of cases to other agencies, the diagnostic efforts were determined accordingly. Chief emphasis remained upon verification, and essentially the same procedure was followed in the investigation of all cases, regardless of the problems involved, or thought to be involved. The record was, therefore, largely given over to descriptions of attempts at verification and accounts of routine data which were not specifically related to the problems in hand.

So long as verification was the chief objective in the investigative phase of case-work, it was to be expected that the chronological record would be retained. Cases continued to be assigned to workers upon a geographical basis for the same reason, since to do otherwise would involve too much moving about. Yet it soon became apparent that the worker who could handle problems of economic relief quite

effectively was not *ipso facto* the best person to handle domestic-discord problems as well.

The result was an increased discontent in family case-work circles with the older common-sense point of view which left little to the case-worker as far as treatment was concerned except to carry out the recommendations of outsiders. And whether in relation to domestic discord or other problems, the feeling became rampant in case-work circles that the profession could develop within itself specialists in the treatment of its problems. The result has been the initiation of a new stage in the development of diagnosis in family case-work.

This new stage in diagnostic development is characterized by the conviction that case-work in the past has been too segmental and didactic in its approach. Accordingly, case-workers are turning to social psychology for its synthesizing conception of human nature and conduct as the basic foundation for the understanding of the interrelations between problems. Treatment is becoming again the goal of case-work, with the realization that diagnosis is an integral part, the first step, in the treatment process.

#### DIAGNOSIS AND THE INTERVIEW<sup>1</sup>

The term "diagnosis" is closely related to another term, "analysis," which has already been discussed with reference to domestic discord.<sup>2</sup> Analysis is quite generally understood to mean the breaking-up of a thing into its constituent parts. By an easy extension it is often used, especially in logic, to mean the tracing of things to their sources, or to resolving knowledge into its ultimate units. Pragmatism, however, has demonstrated that this body of ultimate reality is only

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Domestic Discord*, pp. 53-64.

<sup>2</sup> See above, chap. viii.

an abstraction in which concrete experiences are broken up into parts and finally related to a relatively simple body of principles or laws. So in the social field, analysis is a process of abstracting out of a disorderly world of social experience those uniformities which can be related to a series of explanatory principles, useful because they provide the mechanism by which one can predict what will occur in the future.

Diagnosis is closely related to analysis and yet has quite a different meaning. The term was introduced into social work by analogy from the field of medicine. Diagnosis in medicine is the study of symptoms in the light of extant medical knowledge for the purpose of determining the nature of the malady, its gravity, and probable course. It does not add anything to the sum total of medical knowledge, but relates a particular case to what is already known. The object is, of course, to determine what shall be the treatment, just as that is the object in social diagnosis. It is apparent, then, that social diagnosis refers to the process of investigation and the classification of the findings into groups in accordance with the accepted categories, which in family case-work have been called "problems."

The diagnosis of a problem, therefore, is based upon a series of findings obtained through the investigative process in which the interview plays a predominant rôle. An understanding of the interviewing process is, then, fundamental not only for the obtaining of adequate data, but for an understanding of the diagnostic process as well.

Interviews may be of several kinds: (1) diagnostic, (2) research, and (3) treatment, depending upon the purpose in mind. The primary purpose of the diagnostic interview is to bring out the symptoms so that a diagnosis may be made. Treatment can then follow upon the basis of the diagnostic

findings. Other types of interviews may contain diagnostic elements, but not exclusively so. Yet it is characteristic of interviews in family case-work that they are combinations of two or more of these types. In the process of the treatment of a particular case, diagnostic elements tend to predominate in the early interviews, giving away exclusively or nearly so to other elements in the later contacts.

The research interview is more closely related to analysis than to diagnosis. Its primary purpose is to obtain data for analysis of the situation in terms of fundamental principles. It is not concerned with treatment at all and does not, therefore, constitute as important an element in the interviewing process of family case-work as do the other two types. Yet research elements enter into the interviews of case-workers on occasion and thereby provide data for building up more satisfactory diagnostic categories from time to time.

The primary function of the treatment interview, on the other hand, is to furnish data for neither analysis nor diagnosis, but to give treatment. It is in the analysis of this type of interview that terms such as "meeting objections," "catharsis," "coping with attitude," "motivation," "clinching with definite suggestions," have been introduced.<sup>1</sup> These terms indicate that the type of interview thought of is what may be called the "persuasive interview." The function of this form of the treatment interview is to persuade the individual to do something which he does not want to do at the outset. It is concerned primarily with the modification of overt behavior.

A second form of the treatment interview is that in which

<sup>1</sup> See American Association of Social Workers, Chicago Chapter, Committee on Interviews, *Interviews: A Study of the Methods of Analyzing and Recording Social Case Work Interviews*.

the purpose is to bring about a change in the attitudes of the patient, rather than to get him to perform certain immediate overt acts. The mechanism of suggestion, therefore, is likely to be used more frequently than those of persuasion, such as ridicule, arguments, flattery, and epithets. In this type of interview, if overt acts are suggested, or even sanctioned, they tend to be of the sort which on the surface seem unimportant, but which by summation commit the patient to a course of behavior he cannot later abrogate because to do so would involve a complete breakdown of his personal organization.

#### DIAGNOSIS IN DOMESTIC DISCORD

The diagnosis of domestic discord may be thought of, then, as a process of interaction between the case-worker and the couple involved in domestic conflict. The process of the interview, as has already been pointed out, may, and usually does, take the form of both diagnosis and treatment. The treatment process, however, requires contacts beyond the initial one, though diagnosis may be completed at that time.

While the diagnosis of domestic discord, from the standpoint of formal recording in family case-work, results chiefly in the differentiation of a limited number of problems such as desertion, non-support, separation, and domestic infelicity, within the records themselves and in the practice of treatment greater elaboration in diagnosis is implied.<sup>1</sup> Thus the diagnosis of domestic discord tends to take the form of empirical analyses where the problem is of the more general type frequently referred to as "domestic infelicity."

The first step in the diagnosis of a case of domestic discord

<sup>1</sup> For a more detailed development of these points see Mowrer, *Domestic Discord*, pp. 37-52.

is to interview each person separately. Interviewing both at the same time has been found too often to provoke both to make recriminations which only interfere with the treatment process. On the whole, office interviews are more successful than home interviews, because they facilitate privacy and give to the whole treatment process a professional air which is a decided asset. All materials are considered strictly confidential by the case-worker even to the extent of eliminating direct verification. Check on the accuracy of the account is made indirectly by repeating questions asked previously, developing at great length aspects which at first seem contradictory, and testing by inner consistencies.

The diagnostic interview is not, of course, allowed to take its own course, but is directed at every turn and is always within the control of the interviewer. Data upon the early development of the personality are obtained first. Then facts related to the interaction between the individual and his environment are secured next, followed by data on the interaction between husband and wife, and finally the way in which the individual rationalizes his conflicts in marriage relations.

Proceeding from the early life of the individual to the present conflict situation has certain advantages over reversing the process. In the first place, the individual is able to take a more detached attitude toward his early experiences, and this facilitates control on the part of the interviewer. Second, this detachment tends to carry over as the interview progresses, enabling the individual to sense for himself the continuity of his life-history and thereby to become, with the help of the analyst, more objective toward himself and his own experiences. Inasmuch as this latter phase is a part of the treatment process, diagnosis passes imperceptibly into therapy.

TREATMENT TECHNIQUES IN DOMESTIC DISCORD<sup>1</sup>

Not all treatment of domestic discord is direct, as the discussion of the intertwining of diagnosis and therapy would imply. In fact, in the development of the case-work approach to domestic-discord problems, the first treatment techniques used tended almost wholly to be of the indirect type in which the case was referred to other agencies.

The most commonly used indirect techniques are: court of domestic relations, birth control instruction, medical examination, psychiatric examination, housekeeping instruction, drink cure, and extradition.

The most widely used of the indirect-treatment techniques is that of the court of domestic relations with which 60 per cent of all cases included in the Chicago study had contact. Yet the percentage of adjustments in cases having contact with the court was only 3.5 as compared with 5.4 per cent where the treatment was restricted to direct techniques. But while the court technique is more currently used than any other, this is not so much the result of feeling that the technique is appropriate as it is that there is little else that can be done. Case-workers recognize, for the most part, that the usual result of court action is to create in the husband a feeling that his wife has violated the confidential nature of the marriage relationship and so cause him to blame her. Court action thus only widens the breach between husband and wife in the larger proportion of cases, if not in all, because it is fundamentally coercive in its procedure.

The next most important of the indirect techniques is that of psychiatric examination. Case-work has looked to psychiatry of recent years for a key to unlock many of the

<sup>1</sup> For a more extended treatment with illustrations of each of the techniques see *Domestic Discord*, pp. 90-215.



doors to treatment. The implication of the point of view is that mental twists of various sorts are responsible for many of the social maladjustments with which the case-worker has to deal. Case-workers dealing with domestic discord, however, are discovering that the cases in which conflict between husband and wife is the result of psychoses are rather rare and that many other factors have to be taken into account. Much the same thing may be said for medical examinations. And while both of these indirect techniques have their place in an all-round treatment of domestic discord, their function is primarily diagnostic rather than therapeutic.

The giving of birth-control instruction has received the sanction of family case-workers for some time. Yet the use of this technique in domestic-discord cases is not at all widespread. Two lines of reasoning seem to be responsible for the use of this technique. The first is that large families only add to the economic burden which is often thought to be at the root of the discord situation. The other assumption is that the fear of pregnancy is often responsible for sexual incompatibility. As the latter assumption has come in for more attention, the conviction has also become more prevalent that it is futile to give instruction in the mechanics of birth control without including considerable instruction in sex hygiene.<sup>1</sup>

The difficulties in the use of the other indirect techniques, extradition, drink cure, and housekeeping instruction, are becoming more and more apparent. They are, generally speaking, as are all indirect techniques, too restricted in ap-

<sup>1</sup> One of the pioneers representing this broader point of view was Eva Markham Weber of the Jewish Social Service Bureau of Chicago, whose untimely death interrupted a piece of work of the highest merit.

proach. And while they may all, with the exception of the court of domestic relations, be considered valuable adjuncts to the direct-treatment techniques, they cannot be substituted for these. In fact, the trend at present is away from reliance upon the indirect methods of treatment and the development of methods within the organization itself.

#### DIRECT-TREATMENT TECHNIQUES

The direct-treatment techniques are: auto-suggestion, ordering and forbidding, persuasion, and conference. Of these the auto-suggestion technique, introduced into case-work as the result of the vogue of the French mystic, Coué, has had little acceptance. Of the remaining three, that of ordering and forbidding has, until recently, been the more widely used.

The essence of the ordering-and-forbidding technique is that of commanding the disappearance of that which the case-worker considers undesirable and the appearance of the desired. Whether explicit or implied, there is always back of such commands a threat of coercion in some form, whether through the courts, the police, neighborhood opinion, or what not. Commands are buttressed by categorical definitions of situations in terms of right and wrong. The wishes of the person, for the most part, are left out of account, while pressure is brought upon him to realign his conduct in terms of group standards. The implication is, of course, that the person can revamp his conduct by an act of will, and that the way to get him to do so is to force him to by mobilizing the collective will of the community.

The effectiveness of this technique is dependent upon whether or not the worker has the prestige sufficient to carry her judgment across, or is able to produce the force necessary

to get her commands obeyed. But though the technique be effective for the moment, the difficulty, as is being more and more recognized, is that the repressive process is likely to lose its effectiveness in time, and that this method generally deals with only symbols of discord rather than with the discord elements themselves. Thus, even though the repression is complete, in time the discord finds, or tends to find, expression in other channels and so the conflict situation is revived.

The persuasion technique is assuming a more important rôle of recent years as a treatment process. It is that technique by which the worker attempts by advice, argument, and reasons to influence behavior in the direction of adjusting conflicts. Instead of taking a dictatorial attitude as she does in the ordering-and-forbidding technique, her attitude is that of one who attempts to see a problem or situation from all sides. Instead of categorical pronouncements of right and wrong, the worker tries to show that the best interests of the persons lie in conducting themselves in the fashion suggested. Or, perhaps, she parries a bit to discover what reasons are likely to be the most convincing and then uses these in support of her advice.

Three types of appeal, at least, may be found in case-records: (a) appeal to will-power, (b) appeal to fear, and (c) appeal to love and affection for one's children. Where the appeal is to will, the worker virtually says to the individual, "You can do differently if you only *will* to do so. Why not end the conflict by erasing the conflicting elements?" So the program of conduct is outlined in accord with the demands of the other and one is expected to follow it out by an act of will.

Where the appeal is to fear, the fear element is not that of

the police and the courts, but what is defined as the inevitable results of a certain line of conduct. That is, the worker does not threaten court action, but only points out that such conduct will inevitably lead to such action, though she, of course, would not be a party to it. Or, it may be in terms of community action such as loss of prestige, etc. Or, still again, it may place one's family in jeopardy, or lose their respect, etc.

Appeal to love for children may be simply in terms of the protective impulses of parents, or it may take on more complex forms such as the desire to retain their respect in later life.

But whatever the appeal used, the essential facts are that the persuasion technique is an attempt to get the individual to do something by persuasion and argument which he did not want to do at the outset. The drive is to get the individual to take over the judgments and attitudes of the worker, not because they are authoritative pronouncements, but because they conform to what seems to be a rational interpretation of the facts in the case. The persuasion technique implies a decision to accept or reject the solution offered by the worker "on the spot," and herein lies the weakness of the technique. It is calculated to produce a change in overt behavior without due regard to the necessary covert processes involved in a change of attitudes and wishes.

The conference technique differs from the other direct methods of treatment in that the essential features are not the psychological mechanisms involved. The distinctive characteristics of this technique are, in fact, the structural elements—the stage-setting so to speak. As far as the mechanisms are concerned, there may be an intermingling of the

ordering-and-forbidding, persuasion, etc. The essentials of the technique are that both husband and wife are brought together in an artificial setting—usually an office—presided over by an arbitrator, the worker. Each person is interviewed in the presence of the other, and other persons than the worker may either “sit in” on the interview or take part in it. The outstanding purpose of a conference is that of arriving at some sort of plan to which both husband and wife will agree. The plan is expected to govern future conduct in such a way as to prevent discord, or at least to prevent the recurrence of the situations which in the past have caused conflict.

The conference technique represents, in a sense, the culmination of the older point of view in the case-work approach to the treatment of domestic discord. As such it defines certain assumptions in the older philosophy of case-work. First, one may point out the assumption that husband and wife know what the conflict is all about. Second, that with a few suggestions from the case-worker they can arrive at a solution of their difficulties. Third, that an adjustment can be accomplished immediately, an act of will being the chief requisite. Fourth, that the process of adjustment is a rational one. Fifth, that the truth can be arrived at by checking the reports, one against the other, in each other's presence and that to arrive at the truth is a paramount part of the process. Sixth, that persons generally quarrel about unimportant details, though fundamentally in agreement in the more fundamental aspects of domestic relations. And seventh, that only organic difficulties are fundamental in preventing adjustment.

It is apparent, however, that an approach based upon such assumptions implies a rationalistic outlook upon hu-

man behavior which is becoming increasingly untenable. Family case-work is thus finding that the older methods based upon common sense do not yield the results expected, and so attention is shifting to the need for specialists in domestic discord who can work out techniques more consistent with the modern developments in the science of social behavior. This implies, of course, considerable change in approach, and a re-emphasis upon the experimental nature of case-work.<sup>1</sup>

#### THE SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL TREATMENT OF DOMESTIC DISCORD

The difficulty of the older approach to the treatment of domestic discord in case-work was, as case-workers now realize, that only the overt behavior of the individuals was taken into account. Since diagnosis was restricted to the more apparent aspects of behavior, treatment consisted chiefly in attempts to bring the conduct of the individual into conformity with the demands of the group. Since no account was taken of the attitudes of the individual, it was to be expected that treatment processes would take little account of the fact that the outer elements of conflict are generally only indirectly related to the inner elements.

The most significant aspects of domestic discord, however, are the ways in which dissatisfaction in one form becomes defined in the attitudes of one person toward the other and tends to produce friction in other phases of relationship which previously had been satisfactory. This process by which conflict becomes defined in the relations between husband and wife is not to be treated by pressing the elements into molds and considering them as static entities.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Marcus, *Some Aspects of Relief in Family Case Work*, pp. 98-119.

These elements of conflict are by their very nature dynamic and must always be considered in relation to the contracting and expanding personalities of both husband and wife.

The problem of the social therapist, then, is to ferret out these hidden meanings of the overt conflict and to reinterpret the family situation of the individuals in such a way as to bring about accord. Thus the task set is to break down certain barriers which have developed in the relations between husband and wife and which prevent amiable relations within those areas of interaction, these tending in turn to lead to individualization of behavior in other areas or phases of relations.<sup>1</sup>

The methods of the social therapist in the treatment of domestic discord may be outlined, tentatively, in the following fashion:

1. Verbalized control, i.e., modification of attitudes through primary contacts
  - a) Overt behavior modified by
    - 1) Persuasion
    - 2) Suggestion
    - 3) Displacement
  - b) Covert behavior modified by
    - 1) Suggestion
    - 2) Displacement
2. Educational control, i. e., modification of attitudes through secondary contacts

The persuasion technique, as has already been seen, is argumentative in form and is much more applicable where immediate overt behavior is desired in a specified way. Suggestion may be either direct or indirect, the latter being the

<sup>1</sup> For illustration of how such treatment may be made in cases of domestic discord see Mowrer, *Domestic Discord*, pp. 216-36.

more effective on the whole. Both types of suggestion may be used effectively in initiating either overt or covert behavior.

The displacement technique consists in giving to both husband and wife a mechanistic explanation of their conflicts, i.e., in terms of simple, predictable behavior patterns, to take the place of the usual moralistic explanations. This implies, of course, getting at the genesis of the conflict and discovering its relationships in an organic fashion to the whole of the behavior of the persons. The efficacy of this technique lies in the fact that if successful at all it tends to modify both overt and covert behavior at the same time by breaking down the barriers of inner tensions and antagonisms.

The possibilities of educational control are yet to be realized, but it seems plausible to expect that the social therapist will take advantage of the possibilities for secondary contacts to carry on his process of treatment when he is personally absent. The propagandist has demonstrated the effectiveness of the use of secondary contacts in "putting across" behavior patterns, so it is to be expected that the social therapist will find the same technique an asset in the treatment of domestic discord.

Chief emphasis in treatment from this point of view, then, would be directed toward building up attitudes of accord by a process of verbalized control of the situation from both angles, outside pressures and forces, and the relations within the marriage group. In this process primary emphasis would be placed upon covert behavior rather than upon overt responses. Attempts to modify overt behavior,



however, would serve a useful function if they were of the sort which did not tend to arouse resistance and tended eventually to result in the modification of related covert processes.

This outline of treatment techniques is, of course, highly tentative and general. Yet its effectiveness has been demonstrated with a sufficiently large number of cases to insure the essential soundness of the approach.<sup>1</sup> In order, however, to reduce the empirical processes to more formal techniques which can be more easily transferred and more rigorously tested, further details will need to be worked out in contact with cases. This seems to indicate the need for the development of domestic-discord clinics in which the necessary experimental work might be carried on with greater facility than is now possible where the analytical and therapeutic processes are likely to be too much separated.

The treatment of domestic discord has developed, then, from the simple beginnings of control through gossip to the highly involved techniques of the social therapist. The process represents not only a transition from common-sense to professional specialization, but also a radical change in conception of human nature and the nature of domestic discord. This change may be summarized in a few words by saying that rationalistic and segmental conceptions have given way to mechanistic and organic in which the principle of interaction is developed. Thus the development of treatment processes in domestic-discord cases has kept step with that of the analytical processes.

<sup>1</sup> See a forthcoming study by Harriet R. Mowrer on "Personality Disorganization and Domestic Discord" in which both the analysis and treatment of cases are developed in detail.

## SUGGESTED READINGS

Colcord. *Broken Homes*, chaps. iii-x.

Groves. "Some Sociological Suggestions for Treating Family Discord," *Social Forces*, VI (1928), 569-75. Reprinted with slight modification as chap. vi in Groves and Ogburn, *American Marriage and Family Relationships*.

Marcus. *Some Aspects of Relief in Family Case Work*, pp. 98-119.

Mowrer. *Domestic Discord*, esp. chaps. vii-xv.



**PART IV**  
**CONCLUSIONS**



## CHAPTER XII

### THE CHANGING FAMILY

Critics of present-day society tend to take one or two views: either that maladjustments are the result of failure to live up to the ideals of the past or that the institutions of the past no longer function appropriately. The first point of view is based upon the assumption that social institutions having begun upon an ideal basis, or having developed to an ideal state, need not change. The second viewpoint assumes that social institutions are always in a process of change, if not development, but this change may not always be in step with other changes to which it is related. So these analysts see in the modern disorganization of the family indications that the family institution has not kept pace with other social changes.

This lag in family forms and standards of practice is often looked upon as a part of a larger lag in the development, or change, in non-material culture.<sup>1</sup> Material culture, according to this point of view, changes readily in response to human inclination and curiosity through the processes of invention and borrowing. The advantages of new tools, new methods of production, new vehicles of transportation, etc., are more or less obvious, depending upon the multiplicity

<sup>1</sup> The distinction between material and non-material culture may be made as follows: The material culture of a people is made up of the material goods which they possess and use—tools, machines, implements, utensils—every material object, in fact. The non-material culture, on the other hand, consists of folk ways, mores, techniques, philosophies and beliefs, knowledge, and the arts. See Wissler, *Man and Culture*.

of social contacts, and are accepted with little or no resistance. Changes in material culture, however, necessitate related changes in non-material culture, in morals, in ethics, in religion, and in the whole framework of social institutions and relations.

Accordingly, the cultural analyst sees in the disorganization of the modern family evidence of lag between the material conditions of modern life and the rules, regulations, and ideals governing marriage relations. Orthodox family relations, he finds, were probably fairly well adapted to an earlier set of social conditions under which they developed, but they are no longer suitable to present-day society. In support of this conclusion he points out that much modern practice is at variance with the forms which are assumed to operate, and the lag is only made more acute by the harassment which follows the discovery on the part of society that a portion of its population is no longer honoring, except in the breach, the sanctioned forms of marriage relationship.

But even among those who agree that change in family forms and ideals is necessary, there is still considerable difference of opinion with reference to both the extent and the nature of those changes. One group holds to the optimistic view that the family will soon adjust itself upon a new plane of practice, more perfect than ever before attained. Another group, more skeptical than the other, sees only continual change ahead. Disorganization, accordingly, makes way for reorganization, to give way again to disorganization and thus prepare the way for reorganization, *ad infinitum*. Social change is thus as endless as it is inevitable. The only thing which can be done about it is to lessen the "growing pains" by facilitating the changes in one

field which are the inevitable outgrowth of changes in another.

The fundamentalist, however, objects to this explanation and description by pointing out that in no period of history has there been so great disorganization of the family as at the present time. This, the cultural analyst counters, is due to two things: (1) the human tendency for one to idealize the past, and (2) the increase in the rate of change.

Nothing is more human than the tendency to idealize the past. Youth sees the world through colored glasses and is not afraid to try new things, new ideas. But everywhere he finds himself subordinate to an older generation. He rebels, but his rebellion is not taken seriously—it is only youth having its fling. The older generation, on the other hand, forgetting the liberalism and optimism of its own youth, finds the present full of causes for alarm. The conviction becomes patent that things are not as they used to be. The unpleasant features of the past are forgotten and only the pleasant remain, giving to the old those roseate hues which make it forever the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. Historical data are marshaled by youth to show the illusions of age only to fall upon deaf ears.

In spite of the tendency to distort the past through idealization, the cultural analyst admits that there is some truth in the observation of the fundamentalist that the present-day disorganization is greater than at any previous time. This, he explains, is the inevitable result of a constant increase in the rate of social change. Social change is not by mathematical but by geometrical progression.<sup>1</sup> Change is a matter of multiplication rather than of summation. The amount of change, therefore, is actually greater within this

<sup>1</sup> See Ogburn, *Social Change with Respect to Culture and Original Nature*.



generation than within the last. And, as the amount increases within a generation, it becomes the more apparent, for no matter how much may have been the change within a longer span than a generation it never looks as great as does the same amount within one's own lifetime.

If one recognizes, then, the inevitability of social change, it becomes apparent that the family will change also to suit the needs of the changed conditions. There is no turning back to the traditional family, worked out under conditions which are no longer in existence. The devastating effect of disorganization can be prevented, however, by facilitating the adjustment and adaptation to the changing order. Not the least of the things which will facilitate adjustment is the acceptance of the fact that whatever direction is given to changes in family practice will have to be continuous, and not simply a remedy once applied for all time. This continuous direction is what social science purports to give, based upon the observation of relationships between the present and the past and between the various elements in the social order.

#### EXPERIMENTATION IN FAMILY RELATIONS

Social change proceeds inevitably by experimentation, whether that experimentation is sporadic or controlled. In the past, change has grown chiefly out of accidental individual variations in behavior. It was not unusual, in fact, for these variations to be the result of failure on the part of the individual to reproduce the copy he was imitating. Thus the individual often did not realize that he was making changes. In other cases, by a trial-and-error process variations were produced. Again, some consciousness of the need might enter into the production of variations, still leaving much of what resulted to accident. And even when previ-

sion and direction became more pronounced, the resulting change often turned out to be quite different from what was anticipated or wanted. This result was largely due to the fact that in every situation there were factors unrecognized which had considerable bearing upon the results of the experimentation.

The social sciences are not generally thought to be in a position to make experiments directly. There are various reasons why this is so, the most important probably being that human behavior is made up of two diverse, yet closely related, elements—ideals and standards of motivation, on the one hand, and the instrumentalities for realizing these goals on the other. Ideals and aspirations have a way of eluding scientific analysis, whereas the instrumentalities are much more tangible and can be subjected to the control of science.

The forms of family relations are instrumentalities and are therefore open to scientific study. And while the social scientist is, perhaps, unable to make experiments himself, he can study those of others. Experimentation in family relations is widespread, if one may take the word of both the conservatives and the radicals. The fundamentalist sees in these variations in family relations from the orthodox standards the prophecy of social decline, whereas to the liberal they are forerunners of a new order. To the social scientist they represent attempts, successful and unsuccessful, to adjust marriage relations to the needs of the individuals concerned. Is there anything in these experiments, then, which will furnish clues to the better adjustment of the family to the conditions of modern life?

The more important of the experiments in family relations have to do with the following aspects of family life: (1) the

form of marriage, (2) the companionate, (3) employment of married women, (4) divorce and remarriage, and (5) the rôle of the members within the modern family.

#### CHANGES IN THE FORM OF MARRIAGE

While monogamy is, and has been, traditionally the accepted form of marriage throughout the United States, except for a brief period of experimentation with polygyny in Utah by the Mormons and with communal regulation of sex relations in the Oneida colony in New York State, there continues to be considerable experimentation in the direction of tempering this conventional practice.

How widespread is the practice of maintaining more than one household is, of course, only vaguely known since the law does not countenance such arrangements. Cases, however, are constantly coming to light of bigamous marriages, or the maintenance of a second household without the formality of marriage. This is especially true in the city where there are many opportunities for men to divide their time between two households without its becoming known.

These experiments seem always to be polygynous, that is, between one man and two or more women. Such arrangements have led to the assertion in some quarters that man is instinctively polygynous in nature. The reasoning underlying this conclusion has been somewhat as follows: It has been generally accepted that the sex impulse is much more constant in the male than in the female. In the female the sex impulse is marked with cyclical fluctuations. Pregnancy precludes sexual relations. Furthermore, the female reaches the menopause at an age when the male is still quite virile. Since there is no interruption in the sex impulse of the male until old age, the argument is that more than one wife is

essential for the satisfactory gratification of the sex instinct without which he will resort to promiscuous relations. This latter alternative, it is pointed out, is historically what has been common practice wherever the prescribed form of marriage has been monogamy.

There is, of course, no denying the widespread practice of extra-marital sexual contacts in American life during the early days, if not until recent times. In the South in particular, prior to the Civil War, concubinage with the Negro woman was a common, if not a sanctioned, practice. These contacts, however, did not threaten the unity of the family since they were universally with women of a lower class and were purely sexual in character. Thus satisfaction of the sex impulse became highly differentiated from the other satisfactions of married life—contacts were with women who had no status, and the family as an economic and property-holding group was not interfered with.

The advocates of monogamy, on the other hand, contend that even granting the social benefits of the widespread practice of extra-marital relations during an earlier period of American life, that is no justification for its continuance under modern conditions. Differentiation of sexual relations from the rest of married life is no longer possible, according to this point of view, in an age in which marriage is chiefly an arrangement for the satisfaction of the desire for affection and response. Furthermore, it is contended, the polygynous theory of the male sex impulse is inadequate since Puritanism has been responsible for the weakness of the sex impulse in woman, and, to a certain extent, for its periodicity. The solution is to teach both men and women the "art of love," and then it will be found that mutual satisfaction will be

most successfully realized in monogamous marriages.<sup>1</sup> The breakdown of puritanical inhibitions, this group contends, will result in strengthening the female sex impulse with a lessening of the effects of periodicity and the interruptions of pregnancy. Some would add also the practice of birth control as a part of the program.

There seems to be little doubt but that the advocates of monogamy are essentially right in their contention that monogamous marriages are better adapted to modern conditions than any of the other arrangements which have been tried in the past. The polygynous theory of man's sexual nature in modern life is based upon the erroneous assumption that marriage is essentially an economic-status-child-rearing institution in which the satisfaction of erotic interests and comradeship have little or no place.

#### FREE LOVE

If, however, sexual adjustment is so intimately tied up with adjustment in other relations in family life and cannot be separated and satisfied outside the family, how are individuals to know in advance that they will be suited to each other? In general, the answer has been said by the radicals to be found in two types of experiments: free love and premarital sexual contacts. Both provide opportunities for determining the possibilities of sexual adjustment without committing the individuals to responsibilities and obligations which cannot be ended except with the sanction of the group.

In a very real sense free love is the culmination of the romantic gospel which knows no restraint or control over

<sup>1</sup> See Lay, *A Plea for Monogamy*, in particular for the presentation of this point of view.

the amorous impulses of the individual. In fact, it is the abandonment of the individual to the dictates of the love impulses which characterizes and forms the core of the doctrine of free love. Burgess has caught the meaning of the romantic ideal and expressed it as follows:

. . . . The meaning of the term "romantic" gets its essential nuances in a contrast with the terms "conventional," "formal," "decorous," and "constrained." For the romantic impulse manifests itself in feelings and sentiments that are profoundly personal and imperious. In its more passionate expression it knows neither limits nor restraints, but possesses the lover so completely that reputation, honor, truth, and loyalty seem as nothing to the smile of the loved one. It is the essence of romantic love that it is unlimited and unrestrained, and the consequence is that it releases all the other elementary passions, jealousy and revenge, so intimately associated with it. . . .<sup>1</sup>

In free-love experiments, then, individuals attempt to realize this romantic ideal without ceremony in their love arrangements. And when love no longer holds the pair together, they are free to go to other lovers without the troublesome impediments which form so much a part of marriage. Not that love can be nothing more than a fleeting fancy, but often it turns out to be. Of course, even in the minds of the advocates of free love there is the hope and the ideal of a love which does not burn itself out, but which lasts indefinitely, enriching the personalities of the two persons and transporting them to an amorous paradise. But since it is difficult to know whether this ideal has yet been attained, the only solution is to enter into such a relationship as can be terminated at will once the bluebird of romance has flown.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Key, *Love and Marriage*.

<sup>2</sup> "The Romantic Impulse and Family Disorganization," *Survey*, LVII (December 1, 1926), 291.

Unfortunately for most free-love experiments, if one may take the results of the Greenwich Village attempts as typical, ideal unions are never realized except with the sacrifice of recognizing other sentiments and interests and even responsibilities. For one thing, no children are contemplated in free-love unions, and yet they frequently appear. While the father can easily evade the responsibility of support, the situation is not so simple for the mother. Furthermore, even the advocates themselves, if the union takes on any permanency, find themselves enmeshed in a labyrinth of satisfactions growing out of mutual interests and comradeship which has no place in the romantic credo.

The second method of determining experimentally the probabilities of sexual adjustment, provision for sexual relations prior to marriage, is not so different from free love in its effect upon the reorganization of family forms. This type of experimentation, however, contemplates termination in conventional marriage should the experiment prove successful. It is, in a sense, a revival of an old practice in which marriage was not consummated until conception, except that sexual harmony rather than fertility becomes the test of whether or not the union is desirable.

These so-called trial marriages depend upon the prevention of conception for their success; otherwise the responsibility of care of the offspring complicates the situation. Critics of this sort of change in the form of marriage have hit upon this as the most pronounced objection to it. Further objection is raised that the tentativeness of the arrangement will only tend to increase the instability of marriage, leading to what Goodsell calls "serial polygamy."<sup>1</sup>

A much more formidable objection to trial marriage seems

<sup>1</sup> *The Family as a Social and Educational Institution*, pp. 501-2.

to have been overlooked by its opponents, namely, that a higher standard of adjustment will ordinarily be required to be considered successful than is currently accepted. The result is likely to be the setting-up of standards which are on the whole beyond realization within the time set, though some approximation might be attained within the period normally allowed under conditions where liberal divorce legislation obtains.

#### COMPANIONATE MARRIAGE

Trial marriage is essentially related to what has sometimes been called "companionate marriage" and therefore forms the basis of objection to the proposals of Judge Lindsey. As the term "trial marriage" has been used in this discussion, however, it refers to a preliminary arrangement entered into without ceremony or legal sanction. It is undertaken with the idea of being legalized if successful. The arrangement could, of course, with the proper legislation, be legalized from the first by providing easy exits in the case of failure after a predetermined period of time. This, in fact, is part of the proposal of Judge Lindsey.

Companionate marriage, as proposed by Judge Lindsey, is not a visionary program but a proposal that a type of marriage experiment, how widely current no one knows, be given legal sanction. In brief the essential features are somewhat as follows: (1) the customary ceremonialized marriage, (2) legalized birth control, (3) divorce by mutual consent should the marriage prove unsuccessful after proper safeguards requiring submission to a special agency of reconciliative experts, (4) modification of the arbitrary legal right of the wife to support and alimony, and (5) an educational



program in marriage relations for both the unmarried and the married.<sup>1</sup>

Judge Lindsey's companionate marriage is, therefore, a legally sanctioned marriage with certain features which are probably being realized in practice to a greater extent than is generally appreciated. The differential birth-rates between the upper and lower classes is eloquent testimony of the widespread use in the upper range of society of birth-control measures. The limited number of collusion cases discovered in divorce courts is eloquent testimony of the much greater number of marriages which are terminated by mutual consent. Records of divorce cases also reveal property and alimony settlements in which the wife did not demand her traditional right to support. Not infrequently these settlements are in accord with a mutual agreement entered into at the time of marriage. Of the remaining features, the educational elements are partially realized through the wide circulation of books on marriage relations and the love life, and courses in aspects of marriage relations in colleges and universities. The reconciliative feature is also being partially realized through the services of family case-work agencies.

Much of the opposition to Judge Lindsey's proposal is based, accordingly, not so much upon the variance of his program from current practice as a refusal either to recognize or to sanction certain experimental changes in the modern family. Criticism has centered chiefly around the experimental nature of the marriage relation expressed in the epithet "trial marriage," and the renouncement of the social responsibilities to beget and rear children.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Preface to the revised edition of Lindsey, *The Companionate Marriage*; also reprinted in Spaulding (ed.), *Twenty-four Views of Marriage*, pp. 193-204.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Groves, *Social Problems of the Family*, pp. 89-105, or his more extended criticism, *The Marriage Crisis*.

However much one would like to see the idea of permanency retained in modern marriage, the widespread resort to divorce reveals only too well the tentativeness of modern marriage arrangements. It is difficult to see how Lindsey's proposal could make for greater instability than is already made possible by the divorce legislation and administration in several states under the leadership of Nevada. Any attack upon this feature of Judge Lindsey's proposal is equally applicable to practices which characterize a large group of the population.

The second criticism of companionate marriage is that it resolves the marriage relationship into one essentially upon a sexual basis without opportunity for the maturing of this elemental instinct into conjugal and parental affection. Sex as the basic interest in the companionate, according to Groves, tends to dwindle in time. In orthodox marriage the interest is transferred to children and that explains why children prevent divorce.<sup>1</sup> This point of view, however, fails to recognize that husband and wife can develop other mutual interests as strong as that which has centered around children in the past. In fact, the modern trend is toward emphasis upon just such interests. The lack of desire for children may be, furthermore, just as much a fear and feeling of uncertainty about the desirability of rearing children as a reluctance to be hampered by them in fulfilling selfish desires.

From another point of view, the companionate is the logical development out of marriage based upon romantic matings, since it involves a frank recognition of the connection between love-making and children, whereas in the earlier form of romantic marriage children constituted a by-product, unsought for but yet accepted as a matter of course.

<sup>1</sup> Groves, *The Marriage Crisis*, p. 96.

The change in marriage, accordingly, may be sketched as follows: orthodox marriage in which economic motives, continuance of family name, etc., were primary → romantic-love (a sublimated form of sex interest) marriage → companionate marriage.

In the transition the essential features of companionate marriage are those which characterize many modern marriages, as Knight was the first to point out, and to which he first applied the term.<sup>1</sup> The motives for companionate marriage in the original sense are comradeship, sharing of mutual interests, as well as sexual response. Such unions assume the control of childbirth in the interest of the realization of other values than the propagation of the species. They do not, however, preclude children in all cases, but they contemplate their advent into the world at a time mutually determined in the interests of realizing the chief aim of the marriage relation—companionship.

In fact, there seems little doubt but that much of experimentation in modern marriage growing out of the romantic conception is faulty in a very real and basic sense. Both the conservatives and the radicals have taken sexual relations as the basis for their attack, either upon conventional practices or upon deviations from those practices. To the conservative, sex impulses are powerful motives propelling one into marriage, but once this relationship is accomplished they should be controlled in the interest of the propagation of the species. To the radical, only the release of these impulses will bring about happy marriage. The married should, accordingly, learn "the art of love" in order to raise their relations to a higher plane than is possible in orthodox marriage.

<sup>1</sup> "The Companionate and the Family, the Unobserved Division of an Historical Institution," *Jour. Soc Hyg.* X (May, 1924), 257-67.

Both, however, fail to recognize the cultural nature of sex impulses. While it is true that the intimate responsiveness between the sexes is instinctive, the forms of expression are not. Even the strength of the impulse is closely related to the cultural background of the individual. The result is that in happy marriage relations the sexual becomes diffused throughout the whole range of emotional satisfactions growing out of married life. This diffusion is the natural condition, unless checked by factors producing dissociation between sex and other aspects of marriage relations.

The conservative's attitude that sexual relations should be restricted to propagation fails to recognize this diffusive nature of sex and sanctions the dissociation between sexual contacts and other phases of marriage relations. Not uncommonly in the past this has led to extra-marital sexual contacts on the part of the husband. In so far as the doctrine has been accepted, practice and theory have tended to clash. It is doubtful if there has ever been any widespread restriction of sexual relations to the minimum needs of propagation.

In the programs of radicals this inadequate conception of the sex impulse has often found expression in the attitude that it is difficult to determine in advance whether two persons are sexually adaptable to each other, therefore there should be some opportunity for determining this experimentally. The facts are, that with the proper training and instruction, there are few couples who could not become sexually adjusted. What is lacking are the facilities for furnishing married couples with the necessary assistance and instruction in sexual adjustment, rather than leaving them to muddle along with a large majority failing to find any solution to their difficulties.

## EMPLOYMENT OF WIVES

While changes in the form of marriage, as have already been discussed, are intimately related to the other types of experiments in family relations, they do not contain the whole of modern changes. In fact, perhaps, no experiment has been so widespread and so revolutionary as the employment of wives outside the home. This change is, of course, part of the movement for the emancipation of women which has produced as revolutionary results upon the social structure in the twentieth century as did the Industrial Revolution in the nineteenth.

Opponents of the employment of married women have based their plea upon the doctrine that a wife's place is in the home. For her to be employed means neglect of her children, failure to provide for her family the comforts of home life, and unfair competition with unmarried women since she is able to underbid them. Where the financial standing of the family does not permit the employment of competent care for children, the employment of the mother necessarily leads to their neglect. The protagonists have pointed out, however, that in the middle classes especially there are often few or no children. Furthermore, where there are children to be cared for, except for a comparatively short period after childbirth, competent nursemaids can be secured at a fraction of what the wife earns and who are probably better equipped for their care than she.

As for household duties, these also can be provided, either by employing housekeepers or by living in an apartment hotel, leaving the wife free to make the wider contacts of employment which will make her a better companion to her husband than the old-fashioned housewife whose mental horizon was bounded by the petty affairs of the household.

Furthermore, it is contended, modern conditions are such as to leave to the married woman a large amount of leisure time which if taken up by gainful employment will result in the enrichment of her personality.

When it comes to the matter of the so-called unfair competition with unmarried women, it is contended that underbidding on the part of married women is comparatively rare. Furthermore, married women often feel that the right to independence and to engage in interesting activities outside the home is in no way changed by marriage.

In spite of the growing tendency toward employment of married women outside the home, she still has to run the gauntlet of having her neighbors look upon her with condescending tolerance upon the assumption that she is forced to work by economic pressure. Even though the employed wife realize that not infrequently this attitude on the part of the other individual is one of rationalizing her own incompetence or disinclination to do anything other than housework, this realization does not entirely prevent the sting.

The position of the employed wife is further complicated by the attitudes of her husband toward her. To the unemancipated husband, her employment means a loss of the power and supremacy which has been for generations the prerogative of the male. He tends to compensate with demands for unquestioned submission to his wishes in petty matters, or belittles the efforts of his wife. In fact, intense jealousy of the accomplishments of his wife is not unusual, should she in any way threaten to excel him.<sup>1</sup>

In those social classes where the combined incomes of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Groves, "The Psychology of the Woman Who Works," *Family*, VIII (May, 1927), 92-97.

both husband and wife does not permit entire freedom from responsibilities, the position of the working wife is often a precarious one. She is likely to feel that her husband should share in the household duties upon a common basis. He, on the other hand, may either refuse to do so or acquiesce reluctantly. Irritation is the inevitable result in either case. Even though he seems to share willingly, his wife has her periods when she wonders if he does not resent the responsibilities.

On the other hand, however, the married woman who finds employment outside the home finds satisfaction in the sense of the equality with her husband which it gives her. She also loses that sense of inferiority which has characterized her sex from time immemorial. She is less likely, accordingly, to become neurotic, for she finds in her work an outlet for her creative energies. And even though her work is not as interesting as she might like, there is always the compensating feature that she is neither dependent nor under obligations to anyone for her support.

Thus the rôle of the modern wife has been radically changed within a century from a subordinate housewife and child-bearer to a partner in a common enterprise, sharing equally with her husband in the privileges and responsibilities. While this changed rôle has not been wholly realized among all classes, the increasing tendency toward employment of married women indicates the trend. The employed wife, accordingly, symbolizes the accomplishments of the feminist movement with its goal of sex equality.

Nor is the effect of the employment of wives upon family organization to be any the less commended because it has sometimes led to the retaining on the part of women of some of the old prerogatives which are inconsistent with her claim

of "rights"; or, again, her occasional tyrannical domination of family affairs dramatically, symbolized in the cartoonists' henpecked husband. These maladjustments are but the costs of a revolution in practices, which, in time, will adjust themselves.

#### DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

No movement has had a more revolutionary effect upon the family than the divorce movement. It has, of course, been intimately tied up with the whole trend of rebellion against the restraints of the primary group, and the insistence that marriage is solely an affair of the persons themselves. This rebellion has also been closely associated with the feminist movement, since under the traditional form of marriage relations the woman was the chief sufferer.

Accordingly, the tendency to experiment with divorce and remarriage has increased rapidly until it is no longer the unusual event. In fact, there is good reason to believe that whereas at one time divorce meant the end of married life, it has come to mean only a change in marriage partners. To this practice some of the opponents have applied the epithet "tandem polygamy." What has happened, it seems, is that marriage relations with any particular person are considered experimental, to be discontinued in favor of another selection if unsatisfactory, in keeping with the romantic ideal of finding the "one and only" to whom one is suited.

This experimental attitude with regard to marriage is, of course, looked upon with foreboding by those who are opposed to divorce. Their argument is that this attitude will only tend to increase divorce by making the persons more exacting in their demands, and by setting up standards which are inferior to that of the sacredness and permanency



of marriage. Selection will be made more lightly, according to this argument, and the exit from marriage will be utilized upon the slightest pretexts.

There is no doubt but that the possibilities of easy divorce do increase its frequency as an exit from unhappy married relations. It is undoubtedly true, also, that easy divorce encourages marriage where less is known about each other than was generally the situation when divorce was much less acceptable. But it is difficult to be sure that married life is any more unhappy under modern conditions with little restriction upon divorce than under earlier conditions when divorces were either prohibited entirely or very rigidly restricted. In fact, when one considers the intolerable features of many earlier marriages in which every precaution was taken before hand to insure success, one is likely to feel that modern marriage is as successful, if not more so, than was generally true before divorce became a common experience.

At least it is not in the modern temper to require that, once married, individuals must continue the relationship regardless of how distasteful it may be. This is evidenced by the growing liberalization of divorce legislation throughout the United States. But not only has there been an increase in the range of legal causes upon the basis of which divorce may be obtained, but the tendency has been also toward more liberal interpretation of those laws. In many courts, for example, where the laws of the state provide for divorce upon the grounds of cruelty, the most liberal interpretation is made of the statute. So-called mental cruelty is often considered sufficient cause, and only the most nominal proof is required. It is not unusual, in fact, even where the court insists upon evidence of physical cruelty, for it to be

circumstantial and of a nature such that it is apparent that the acts were with the intention of providing cause for divorce.

How frequently there is collusion in securing divorce is not known, but there is much evidence that this practice is widespread. Property and alimony settlements prior to divorce suggest collusion in many instances. The quick hearing and disposal of divorce suits facilitate collusion, as does also the fact that prosecutions and refusal to grant divorce because of collusion are relatively rare. All this is in keeping with the trend toward a changed attitude toward divorce which takes this action out of the field of the immoral and disgraceful, and makes of it the prerogative of the persons themselves. No longer is it considered necessary, therefore, that an individual offend the mores of the group before he can expect to have his marriage dissolved. It is only necessary that he be convinced that his marriage is unsuccessful, and that his marriage partner either acquiesce or agree to the severance of the bonds.

This change in attitude toward divorce is also reflected in the changed attitude toward remarriage. Whereas divorce formerly marked the woman, especially, as somehow *declassé*, today she is, in many circles, the envy of her unmarried sisters for her camaraderie with men which makes of her a welcome companion. Her experience in her previous marriage is no longer a handicap, but has become instead an asset. The result is, as has already been pointed out, a tendency toward remarriage within a relatively short time. In fact, the expectancy of remarriage after divorce seems to be quite as high as after the death of a mate.

Another marked change in practices related to divorce are those having to do with children. Whereas formerly children

became the exclusive charges of either the husband or the wife, the more recent trend seems to be toward the sharing of children after divorce. Thus a child not uncommonly spends a part of the year with one parent and the rest with the other.

#### CHANGED RÔLES IN THE FAMILY

Not only have there been changes in the practices surrounding the disruption of family life, but there have been quite as revolutionary modifications in the relations within the family itself. Especially is this true with regard to the relative positions and rôles of the various members. Most of these changes are so commonplace that it is difficult to realize how recent they are, and to what extent they represent radical departures from practices which were widely current for a relatively longer period of time.

The husband is no longer the head of the household in many families, in spite of the fact that he still provides the family name, as well as the Christian name which his wife uses upon more formal occasions. Within the family circle, however, he is no longer the autocrat whose word is law. In fact, he is lucky if his children look upon him other than as a meddling outsider, or as an ally to be catered to when support is needed in breaking down his wife's opposition to some program of the children.

The wife, on the other hand, finds herself quite the equal of her husband in the family circle, if not the superior. She rules the destiny of the family group with a sympathetic, but none the less determined, hand. She is no longer the drudge and slave of other days. So far as the children are concerned, her commands are even more to be taken into account than those of the father.

This does not mean, however, that the children hold the

same subordinate position which was once theirs. They, in fact, tend to dominate the scene, their wishes determining the policy of the family. Thus the trend seems to be toward the filiocentric family in which the child plays the dominant rôle. He is, of course, controlled by the parents on occasion, to be indulged the next moment. He soon learns how to get his way by giving his allegiance first to the father and then to the mother, or by holding aloof and pitting the two parents against each other. He has never heard the dictum that "children should be seen and not heard," and parental commands serve the function of suggesting what not to do.

The result is that parents are more and more experimenting with child-rearing along lines quite alien to their grandparents. The child is not to be disciplined or coerced, but is to be given the privilege of choosing for himself. Application of "psychology" takes the place of the older controls. Persuasion and suggestion supplant the more direct methods dependent upon physical force.

#### PREDICTION OF FUTURE FORMS

But what do all these experiments promise for the future of the family? Are the new practices which are springing up better adapted to modern conditions than were the old? Are people more happy in the newer forms of family relations than they are in the older forms carried over from a previous generation? Some answer to such questions as these is essential if any control is to be exercised in determining the direction of future development.

On the whole it is easier to predict the probable direction of change in the future than it is to say whether those changes will result in more satisfactory forms of marriage relations. It is quite clear, for one thing, that the rôle of

the wife will be characterized by a more widespread practice and acceptance of the position realized in not a few experiments at the present time. She will find employment in some sort of vocation which is as interesting to her as is her husband's to him. Her experiences in the workaday world will make her a more desirable companion, sharing in a life in which they participate upon an equal basis.

Furthermore, the wife of the future will see in sex relations the symbolization of the response, sympathy, and comradeship which make up their married life, as do a few of her sisters today. She will lose that puritanical aversion and fear, against which she rebelled in the past through neurotic symptoms. That sex relations do not necessarily lead to conception will be taken for granted, facilitated by the widespread use and perfection of birth-control methods. When children are wanted they will be planned for in advance, not only in the best interests of the father and mother but of the child as well.

There will undoubtedly be also a decline in the sway of pure romanticism. This attitude toward marriage Lippmann has described in terms which themselves indicate the fallacies of the idea: ". . . It [romanticism] assumes that marriages are made in heaven, that compatibility is instinctive, a mere coincidence, that happy unions are, in the last analysis, lucky accidents in which two people who happen to suit each other happen to have met. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

Obviously if this conception were sound, the probabilities that a particular selection would be successful would be very slight, so that the individual would continue throughout his lifetime finding his affinity only to discover that he was mistaken and trying over again. Its fallacies grow out of the

<sup>1</sup> *A Preface to Morals*, p. 309.

basic assumption of dissociation between the love life of the individual and the rest of living. It runs directly counter to the facts which indicate that given an initial attraction between two persons, a common social background, common interests and tastes, mutual belief in the possibilities of achieving satisfactory adjustment, compatibility in marriage relations can normally be achieved.<sup>1</sup>

Romanticism is after all but the glorification of the sex impulse and would make of marriage and family life a continuous repetition of the events which characterize the period of courtship. But married life entails mutual responsibilities and ventures which require something more than the passionate outbursts of the lover. As this is more fully realized, more consideration will be given to the needs of companionship, to sympathetic appreciation of each other's ambitions and interests, and less to the initial attraction.

#### HUMAN NEEDS AND THE FAMILY

These predictions do not, obviously, grow out of any highly tested objective consideration of the results of the experiments which are currently being conducted. This is due to the fact that as yet no trustworthy devices have been discovered for measuring the success or failure of these experiments. One is forced, accordingly, to fall back upon impressions, checked by certain essential assumptions with regard to the nature and function of the family in modern life.

Central in the function which the family performs in human relations is the retreat which it provides for both the husband and the wife. It is in the family circle in which the activities of life take on new meanings, out of the sympathy, appreciation, and encouragement which the family provides.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *ibid*, pp. 284-313, esp. 307-11.

This creation of meaning is largely due to the fact that in the family is generated that emotional content which provides motivation so necessary in social adjustment. The keen edge of disappointment is dulled in the family and the individual is rehabilitated. In family relations the individual finds that integration of hopes and purposes which counteracts the trend in modern life toward dissociation, with its inevitable mental conflict.

To the child, also, the family performs well-defined functions in providing the locale for the development of an integrated personality. Some success seems essential for the development of adjusted personalities, and this is supplied in the reassurances within the family circle. In the family, also, the child learns the art of adjusting himself to other individuals under conditions which are conducive to the integrity of personality, owing to a tempering of consequences by sympathy and understanding.

Whatever forms of family relations provide, then, for the satisfaction of these essential needs will be successful. Future development of family forms will be in the direction of those experiments which most satisfactorily realize the fulfilment of these needs. In so far, however, as the selection of elements in family relationships is left to chance and to unconscious direction, adjustments to modern conditions will be halting and imperfect. This has always been true in the past, though, it is only when the process becomes more rapid that it is noticed.

Increase in the speed of social change in modern life, therefore, calls for highly developed techniques of research. Nowhere is this more true than in the field of family relations. If the forms of marriage relations are to be effectively and expeditiously adjusted to the conditions of modern life.

such adjustment will grow out of, and be based upon, research in family relations. Out of this research can come conscious control of future developments to take the place of the wasteful experiments which are so characteristic of the present age.

### SUGGESTED READINGS

Goodsell. *Problems of the Family*, chaps. xvi-xxii and xxiv.

Groves. *Social Problems of the Family*, chaps. vi and xi.

Groves and Ogburn. *American Marriage and Family Relationships*, chaps. ii-iv.

Keyserling. *The Book of Marriage*, pp. 216-43.

Kirchwey. *Our Changing Morality*, pp. 19-33, 37-49.

Lippmann. *A Preface to Morals*, pp. 88-94 and chap. xiv.

Mowrer. *Family Disorganization*, chap. vii.

Pruette. *Women and Leisure*.

Reed. *The Modern Family*, chaps. xvii-xix.

Reuter and Runner. *The Family*, chaps. xiii-xiv and xviii.

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## CHAPTER XIII

### RESEARCH AND THE FAMILY

Most of our knowledge of the contemporary family is highly tentative, if not speculative, as is true also of our information on many other social institutions in modern life. And yet in a sense research in the modern family has lagged behind social research in general, owing to the emotional attachment to the family experience. Ideals and aspirations have got in the way of seeing family relations without bias. Much more pleasing results have been obtained through wishful thinking. This, however, has only thwarted human desires by making prediction and control impossible; or, what is often worse, encouraged endless controversy which has impeded, rather than facilitated, adjustment to modern conditions.

The ultimate object of scientific study of the family is, of course, the prediction of what will happen in family relations under a given set of conditions and circumstances. Prediction of what will happen under a given set of conditions leads to control of what happens by changing the conditions in such a way as to modify the results, if these are undesirable, or making sure that the set of conditions is such as to bring about the desired results.

Control, therefore, in the realm of family relations is dependent upon reliable prediction growing out of unbiased studies of the modern family. At present these studies are in such a tentative stage of development as to make any attempt at control haphazard, if not dangerous. And

yet there seems no reason to believe that a high degree of scientific accuracy cannot be obtained in the social field comparable to that which has been realized in the physical sciences. This is not, however, to be accomplished by following blindly in the pathway of the physical sciences, which have their own peculiar problems, but by developing methods of research suited to the field of the family.

#### THE LOGIC OF SCIENCE

While blind reliance upon the methods developed in the so-called natural sciences is to be discouraged, this does not mean that one may not profit by the errors and successes in the physical field. In fact, a thorough understanding of scientific method as developed in the physical sciences seems to be an essential prerequisite to the development of family research. But more essential, perhaps, than the research devices themselves are the theoretical assumptions underlying these methods, the logical principles upon which the techniques are based.

Scientific research is not simply a matter of going out and collecting data, as some persons seem to think, and then summarizing the facts in forms and patterns which are inevitably determined by the nature of the facts themselves. If that were true, then, given a few rules and instructions, anyone with enough tenacity and perseverance to stick by until the job is finished could produce research of scientific merit.

But facts are not born full bloom to be plucked by anyone. In every perceptive experience there is an infinite number of observations which might be made but which are not. What the individual sees is determined in part, at least, by what he is trained to observe. Thus observation and precon-

ception go hand in hand, and it is only when preconception gets in the way of observation, so to speak, that it interferes with scientific accuracy. Which is to say that so long as preconceptions are considered tentative they are useful devices for delimiting the range of observation rather than allowing it to run on indefinitely.

Facts arise in the field of controversy where the experiences of the individual come into conflict with the accepted doctrines. The individual finds that his observations are somehow not wholly what he had been led to expect they would be in a given situation. He tries, accordingly, to get down to the essential elements of his experience, breaking it up into parts which can be so described that others will agree that they experience the same thing under like conditions. These essential elements are the facts. Appreciation of the nature of the process by which facts are arrived at has caused Professor Park to define a fact as any statement in a controversy to which both parties will agree. Facts are not, therefore, absolute but relative to the age and to the persons who accept them.

But before there are facts, the individual has been engaged in organizing sense impressions into objects which have meaning, which is to say that these percepts are retained in memory and used as signposts in recognizing and organizing the sensations which follow. Yet even percepts themselves do not come to one in the nude, but are clothed in raiment which determines their meaningfulness. Some of these factors are the result of the organization of the brain and the anatomy of the human species; others are related to the cultural complex in which the individual has lived, including the universe of discourse which sets patterns for his reflection; still others arise out of the peculiar experiences of the individual himself.

Perception is thus essentially a social experience in which sensations are organized into objects by fitting them into molds and into patterns prescribed by one's social milieu. These molds are the terms of language through which the experience of the individual is not only communicated to others but is given a form which can serve a useful purpose in the future—not only because it can be more readily remembered, but because it serves for purposes of identification.

It is out of this process of perception, then, that facts arise in problematic situations. The facts of common sense are called "objects," "events," and "statements of relations." Events are entities having extension and always passing continuously into one another. One's eating breakfast in the morning is an event, but it was preceded by another event, one's getting up. In turn it is followed by a third event, one's going to work, for example. If one examines closely, while it is quite apparent that eating breakfast and getting up are quite different, it is not so easy to say where one ended and the other began, and yet no one would make the mistake of saying that eating breakfast preceded getting up. This is what is meant when it is said that events have fixed relations. An event happens once, and having happened its place in the sequence is final and fixed.

Objects, on the other hand, are permanent entities whose relations are constantly changing. Objects are chiefly of three kinds: sense objects, perceptual objects, and scientific objects. Sense objects are those which are directly perceived and to which such names as "green," "red," "hard," and "soft" are given. Perceptual objects, on the other hand, are the things of daily life: houses, trees, chairs, animals, etc.

The third type of objects is the scientific, such as atoms, electrons, molecules, etc. These, however, do not arise in the perceptual process but are the result of conceptualizing experience. It is only objects of this class, in fact, which are strictly permanent. Others are only relatively more permanent than events.<sup>1</sup>

The third type of factual experiences are the relations within experience which are communicable and verifiable. Relations may be either between events, between objects, or between objects and events. Four types of relations are most commonly recognized: similarity and difference, order in space, sequence in time, and ratio of units within the whole. The simplest statements of relations in terms of similarity-difference are those in which two objects are said to have common properties, such as "Both iron and steel are heavy." Order in space is a matter of describing the position of one object with reference to another, such as "A is to the right of B." "B follows A," on the other hand, is the simplest statement possible of sequence in time. Ratio of units within the whole are most commonly expressed in percentages, such as "A is 25 per cent"; "B is 75 per cent."

The second step in scientific research, once the problem has been set up in the form of a hypothesis which defines and limits the scope of inquiry, is to collect facts bearing upon the problem. One does not, of course, collect the facts, i.e., events, objects, and relations, in any strict sense but instead substitutes descriptions of the facts. These descriptions are the observations of either the researcher himself or other competent observers, put into language and recorded in an appropriate system of symbols. In so far as these descriptions of observations correspond to those of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Ritchie, *Scientific Method*, pp. 39-43.

another person, equally skilful in the same field and placed in a similar position, they are considered factual, i.e., as having properties which are existential, at least in part, and are not simply the reflection of the projected ideas of the observer.

The collection of facts, however, is not an end in itself but only a step in the understanding of the world about one. What one wishes to know is the relationship between one fact and another fact. The relations between the facts of the observer, however, are complex and particular, whereas what is wanted are relationships which are comparatively simple and general. It is at this point that the work of the scientist becomes abstract and conceptual in nature.

#### THE PROCESS OF CONCEPTUALIZATION

The process of substituting concepts to take the place of the perceptual experience is, of course not an exclusive device used by the scientist. It is, in fact, only a continuation of the process of common sense whereby what is common and general in perceptual experience is sifted out and retained, while that which is unique and particular is abandoned. The vocabulary of common sense is for the purpose of communicating these general and common aspects of perception. Much of the recording of facts in scientific research is in terms of these conceptual experiences, though in the more highly developed sciences these concepts tend to give way to more refined terms, not infrequently related to scales of measurement and correlated with the number system.<sup>1</sup>

Abstraction thus takes the form of replacing of the actual experiences of the individual by symbols which serve as

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Hobson, *The Domain of Natural Science*, pp. 23-48.

carriers of what he considers to be the essential elements of his experience. Events and objects are grouped by observed regularities or similarities in them. In this third step in scientific method there is always a certain amount of arbitrariness in the selection of what is considered essential, growing out of the training and experience of the researcher.

The sorting of observations into groups or classes culminates in the formation of abstractions or concepts which describe conceptually an entire class. These are the concepts of science, which, once accepted, serve as tools for further research since they can be substituted for the concepts of common sense which are too inexact for a highly developed science. This is particularly true in the social sciences where common-sense terms overlap so much and contain so many nonessential elements as to make their usage highly precarious.

The next step in the conceptual process is that of abstracting out of the complex of conceptualized experience descriptive formulas of the relationship between the conceptual objects and events. When these are projected into the future they become the rules or laws by which prediction can be made. Their function is to supply a shorthand description of the connections between the elements of experience which are general and may be assumed to continue in the future.

The final step in the process of conceptualization is that in which even more simple abstract and hypothetical units are substituted for the conceptual units of the previous step. The character of these units and the relations between them are set up as postulates of the system. This system of units and relationships becomes a scientific principle or theory to which further observations may be related. Scientific explanation consists, therefore, in relating the observations

of research to these conceptual schemes which describe the essential nature and relationships of the experiences within a particular field of observation.

These more general and highly abstract schemes, however, while they develop as the final step in the conceptual process, rarely come out of a single piece of research but are the results of many studies within a given field. It is true, of course, that a particular piece of research may lead to modifications or redefinitions of these conceptual schemes which may, in some instances, change them so fundamentally as to make them appear almost, if not wholly, new inventions. Yet it cannot be said that the new scheme grew wholly out of the particular piece of research, since its direction and development was determined by the conceptual schemes which preceded.

#### SOCIOLOGICAL FRAMES OF REFERENCE

As one passes from the consideration of the logic of science to the application of the principles of scientific research to the understanding of the family, it is necessary to take into account some of the problems of sociological research in general. These problems tend to fall into two categories: those which have to do with the units of analysis and those concerned with relationships.

The concepts of sociology refer to two classes of units which correspond roughly to the two classes of factual experience already referred to, viz., objects and events. The objects and events of sociological analysis, however, are not simple but are complex relational systems. Neither is the distinction between objects and events an absolute one, since as soon as events become generalized they tend to lose their reference to a time setting and thus take on the nature



of objects. In fact, it seems that in so far as sociology adopts the methods developed in the natural sciences it comes more and more to restrict its analysis to objects, losing its predilection for events which characterized the earlier period dominated by historical training.

Nevertheless, much of sociological analysis is still an attempt to chart the historical succession of events. In this process the concrete events are replaced by abstract events which consist of complex systems and are referred to as movements, periods, epochs, stages, and even cycles. In this approach there is implicit in the method either that history repeats itself or that social change reveals an evolutionary development from the simple to the complex. The object is, of course, to get behind the concrete events and discover the larger complexes of relationship which may be projected into the future.

To the extent, however, that events are abstracted out of their concrete time settings, they tend to take on the characteristics of objects. The result is the complete loss of all reference to chronology, except for the retention of the idea of succession or sequence. This transformation may be illustrated in the meaning of evolution as used by earlier writers in comparison with some of the more recent usages. In the early understanding of the term "evolution" the change described was one from lower to higher forms, growth, development, expansion, progression. One stage was thought to be followed by a higher stage as inevitably as the rising and setting of the sun. Prediction consisted, therefore, in discovering what constituted the basic elements of improvement and looking for a more complete realization and development of these elements in the future. When the evaluative character of this notion was observed,

the idea of evolution was modified by some writers to mean simply change from the simple to the complex without pretending to say whether the complex represented a higher or lower level, a more or less desirable development. In this change in meaning the time setting became more nebulous, for, since the characteristics of change were indefinite, except to be more complex, the time was little more than an undefined future. With the modification of the idea to eliminate the direction of change from the simple to the complex, so that evolution meant nothing more than change, any kind of change, no more time setting remained than that implied in the simplest of experiments in the chemical laboratory.

It is clear, then, that the goal of sociological analysis so far as units are concerned is to conceptualize experience in such a way as to provide a series of objects, the relations of which are fairly constant. These objects are not, of course, simple units but are instead complex relational systems, just as is, for example, the atom in chemistry and physics.<sup>1</sup>

Abstraction, which results in the classification of experience into objects or kinds, does not, however, exhaust the possibilities of the conceptual process. It is possible, in many instances if not in all, to discover that whereas all the members of a class have certain common properties upon the basis of which they have been grouped together, they still differ with respect to the extent to which each member possesses this property. Abstraction is further carried on by relating the class to the number system in such a way that each member is considered to possess the property in question in additive units.

<sup>1</sup> Not all the concepts of sociology, however, refer to units of analysis, as House has pointed out. A portion of sociological concepts express points of view (see House, *The Range of Social Theory*, pp. 562-64).

The numerical character of objects arises in two ways: through the process of counting and of measuring. In counting, cardinal numbers are assigned to groups of things; as, for example, the passenger load of a ship is determined by counting those on board. In measurement, on the other hand, a ratio is assigned to represent some property of a thing. Thus to say that a thing weighs two pounds means that the ratio of its weight to the pound weight is two. If the unit is changed into which the property is broken up—to ounces, for example—then the object will be represented by thirty-two. In this way any particular numeral can be made to stand for its weight, depending upon what one chooses as the second term in the ratio. In counting, on the other hand, a number corresponds to one set of aggregates and to no other.<sup>1</sup>

While it seems clear that relating experience to the number system logically follows classification and the development of concepts, sociologists have often been content to utilize the concepts of common sense. The result is that much of what passes for sociology is nothing more than a glorified common sense, even though quantitative in form, since relationships are between the units of common sense. The result has been that the inaccuracies of common-sense classification have been preserved under the guise of having been eliminated through the correlation of observations with the number system.

#### TYPES OF SOCIOLOGICAL RELATIONSHIPS

Once a satisfactory system of concepts has been secured, whether these are also accompanied with appropriate scales of measurement or not, the next step in analysis is to look

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Ritchie, *op. cit.*, pp. 121-22.

for the relationships which hold between the classes described by the concepts. Four types of relationships seem most common to sociological analysis: the processual, the conceptual-contrast type, the attributive, and the functional.

A process in sociological analysis refers to a complex relational system consisting of a large group of units, many of which are only vaguely comprehended, yet having sufficient form to serve for purposes of identification. In some instances processes seem to be closely correlated with the historical sequence of events, whereas in others the setting is simply one of change. In any case, however, a process purports to describe a system or pattern of relations, and to make more intelligible the connections between the elements of social life.

The conceptual contrast is a familiar device in sociological writings. It consists in setting up two antithetical units which serve as limits to a scale. The contrast between the urban and rural environment is a common application of this device. The rural environment refers to the typical organization of attitudes, activities, and wishes of the primary group, in contrast with the complete development of derivative activities, attitudes, and wishes based upon secondary contacts which characterizes the urban environment. Any particular environment will tend to fall, of course, somewhere between the two limits, possessing elements which are both rural and urban. What the conceptual contrast does, therefore, is to set up a scale by defining the two limits but without furnishing the units into which the scale may be broken up, a prerequisite if it were to be used as a measuring device.

Attributive relationships are those in which one trait or

characteristic is found either in the presence or in the absence of another. Since, however, such a conjunction does not necessarily imply the possibility of dissociation between the two elements, a second phase of relationship is generally included, viz., that if a trait is found in the presence of another, then when one is absent both must be absent. In experience, of course, this extreme association is rarely, if ever, realized. Attributive relationships are therefore stated comparatively in terms of the frequency with which one trait appears in the presence of the second, in contrast to its absence.

When traits are no longer found to be present or absent in individual cases, but simply to vary in amounts which can be broken up into additive units, then it is possible to describe the relationship between the position of one trait in a scale and that of another in a second scale. An individual, for example, may be high in intelligence and low in morality. Such relationships when generalized are called "functional," since any modification in the magnitude of one trait will be accompanied by proportional modification in the magnitude of the second trait. This tendency for variations in the magnitude of one trait to be accompanied by variations in the magnitude of another trait is described by a mathematical formula which holds for any point on the scale and may be stated in terms of either trait as the base. To say, for example, that the probabilities of divorce vary inversely with the square root of the husband's income is to describe such a functional relationship between divorce and income.

#### METHODS OF FAMILY RESEARCH

With this review of logical method in mind, both as it has developed in the natural sciences and in sociology, one

may turn to the more specific methods and techniques used in family research. These methods may be grouped into four fundamental types: impressionistic methods, case-study methods, statistical methods, and experimental methods.

Impressionistic methods are not, of course, scientific in any exact sense, since in their very nature they admit inaccuracies which it is the aim of science to foresee and exclude. Yet these methods have found wide usage in the study of the family and have even yielded useful results. The two kinds of impressionistic methods are: the inductive reasoning from casual observation and the deductive or philosophical reasoning. Ordinarily, both are intertwined in any particular piece of analysis. The chief virtue of impressionistic methods is that they result in the formulation of tentative hypotheses for research in which more reliable methods are used. As methods of study they are particularly unreliable, if too much credence is placed in the results, for even at best, when reasoning is chiefly inductive, the observations tend to represent extremes since these are the more readily seen and remembered.

Experimental methods, on the other hand, though successfully used in the natural sciences, seem on the whole unadapted to the needs of family research. Experimentation in the natural sciences not uncommonly results in the destruction of much material before significant results are obtained. This possibility deters use of the method in social research. Besides, human experience is so complex as to make the isolation of factors, so essential to experimental methods, difficult if not impossible. There seems to be little likelihood, for the present at least, that any use of experimental methods will be made in the study of the family.

Case-study methods are concerned with the analysis of

qualitative data and may be differentiated into two types: historical methods and case-analysis. Of these two types, the historical is the older and has been used more widely in the study of the family. More recently, however, historical methods have given way to case-analysis as emphasis has been directed more and more to the contemporary family.

Three varieties of historical method may be distinguished: the narrative method, the natural-history method, and the comparative method. Ordinarily the term "historical method" is used to refer chiefly to what is here called the "narrative method," or, when more strictly used, to the techniques of evaluating documentary evidences as a part of the narrative method.

The narrative method of history is concerned with reproducing a chronological description of past events as they have occurred in the experiences of groups of people. Since, however, it would be impossible to describe everything which happened, even though all had been recorded, it is necessary for the historian to select what he considers to be the most significant events and to describe these as accurately as possible. He is guided in this selection by the discovery of what he considers to be cause-and-effect relationships, and his final product gives him, therefore, a formula for predicting what will happen in the future, since he assumes that the cause-and-effect relationships discovered in past events will continue to hold.

The natural-history method differs from the narrative in that the historical sequences observed in one group are compared with those in another. The elements in the sequences, therefore, take on a generalized form in which the events are typical, and the chronological setting is lost. The result is a generalized developmental picture by which the his-

torian can predict the next stage. This is the method of the philosopher of history.

The comparative method is to be differentiated from the natural-history method chiefly by the fact that the form of the generalized sequence is determined in advance by the evolutionary conception. What the comparative historian wishes to produce is a generalized developmental picture, but in the absence of the necessary chronological accounts covering the whole range of development which he wishes to describe, he substitutes accounts covering a much narrower range, hoping that where one series leaves off another will begin. His method is therefore deductive rather than inductive, the order in the sequence being determined by the evolutionary principle. Otherwise much of his method is like that of the other two types of historians.<sup>1</sup>

The method of case-analysis differs from the other historical methods in general in that the unit of study is some part of the life-history of an individual, rather than a nation, a people, or an institution. Except for the change in point of view which this selection of a simpler *locus* implies, the method of case-analysis has much in common with the natural-history method.

Case-analysis, it would seem, has grown out of the rediscovery that there is some continuity in the life of the individual which is lost when his experiences are broken up into bits and treated as if they were made up of independent units having no closer connection with other elements within the personality than with those outside. The movement toward the use of case-studies represents, thus, a revolt against the segmental approach of statistics in favor of an organic

<sup>1</sup> See Goldenweiser, *Early Civilization*, pp. 20-27, for a critical exposition of the comparative method.



approach which posits an organic, rather than an atomic, relationship between units. Thus while the statistical method is concerned primarily with the analysis of relationships between isolated or particular aspects of a total situation, case-analysis attempts to analyze out of the total situation the whole network of relationships.

It is, in fact, this pattern arrangement within case-studies of individuals with which case-analysis is primarily concerned. For out of a group of case-studies certain general patterns will be disclosed. From one point of view this will lead to abstract descriptions of structural arrangements; from another, to descriptions of processes. The latter is probably more in keeping with the case-analysis point of view, since a case-study is in its very nature a dynamic presentation. These conceptual patterns can then be projected into the future, serving as guides to the relationships to be expected in occurrences of the same class.

#### STATISTICAL METHODS

While case-study methods deal only with qualitative data, statistical methods deal alone with quantitative data. This quantitative character of statistical data, however, may arise in either of two ways. One may note simply the presence or absence of some attribute in a series of observations and count either those which possess it or those in which it is absent. The statistical method applicable to this kind of observation is called the "statistics of attributes." One may, on the other hand, measure the magnitude of some variable character for each of the observations in the series. While the methods known as the statistics of attributes may be applied to the study of this latter type of observation, more

precision is gained by the application of what is known as the "statistics of variables."<sup>1</sup>

The simplest case of statistics of attributes would be that already suggested, viz., a count of the number of instances in which a given attribute was present or absent in a series of observations. This constitutes classification by dichotomy. This simplicity, however, detracts from the usefulness of the classification, though it does form the basis for statistics of attributes. More commonly one is able to differentiate several attributes within each of which there are qualitative differences. This leads to manifold classification. For example, families not only do and do not own their homes, but some of them partly own them. Such qualitative differences for attributes may be extended to the classification of cases according to whether they possess this or that particular quality with reference to one attribute, with this or that quality with reference to a second attribute, a third, a fourth, etc. Thus a family may own its home; be foreign born, native born, or mixed.

Once a manifold classification is obtained upon two or more axes, i.e., attributes broken up into several qualitative classes, the question arises: To what extent is a qualitative difference in one attribute associated with that in another? Formulas have been devised for measuring this association between attributes of which the coefficient of contingency is the most comprehensive.<sup>2</sup> Thus the relationship between attributes may be reduced to a quantitative statement.

While methods applicable to statistics of attributes may also be applied to statistics of variables, the converse is not

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Yule, *An Introduction to the Theory of Statistics*, p. 7

<sup>2</sup> For an exposition of the method of computation see *ibid.*, pp. 63-67.

true. For the application of those methods particularly adapted to the analysis of variables, it is necessary that the trait under consideration present more than one numerical value. That is, the characteristic under observation must be of a variable character the magnitude of which may be measured in each instance. Examples of such variables are: heights, weights, death-rates, wages, etc.

Drawing a number of cases from a universe, it will be found that they will scatter with reference to the unit of measurement of the variable under consideration, i.e., all the cases will not possess the characteristic to the same degree. Not only will they vary in the degree of the attribute, but some units of magnitude will occur more frequently than others.

Generalization begins by reducing this frequency distribution to a statement in terms of an average, of which the mean, median, and mode are the most common. Whatever the average used, it represents an abstraction in terms of which each case may be measured. It is, in other words, the typical case. In actual practice, however, it is customary to allow for some variation from this measure which is often stated in terms of the probable error.

Definition of the typical, however, is only the beginning of statistical analysis. Not only does a particular case possess a given attribute to a certain degree, but it possesses likewise many other attributes, all of which show varying degrees of magnitude. What one wishes to know is the relationship between variables, i.e., the extent to which, if at all, variations in the magnitudes of one characteristic are accompanied with corresponding variations in another. This is determined by calculating the coefficient of correlation.

The coefficient of correlation thus measures the relation-

ship between two variables, i.e., it defines one variable as a function of another. This functional statement not only describes the relationship between two variables in the group of cases studied, but may be expected to hold in other groups belonging to the same class.

Seldom, however, is one satisfied to deal with but two variables in the social field where situations are always highly complex. Extensions have therefore been made in correlation analysis whereby the relationship between two variables can be determined after allowing for the influence of any number of other variables, all of which may be related to each of the two variables under observation and therefore obscure the relationship between these two. Thus by the methods of partial or multiple correlation a series of coefficients may be obtained expressing the relationships in all the possible pairings of the variables under consideration.<sup>1</sup>

Relationships, then, in statistical analysis ultimately reduce themselves to those of time and space. But since time is treated as another dimension, the final result is a statement of relationship in terms of geometrical properties. This represents a high degree of abstraction, and one which it is sometimes contended is not justified by the results. And yet the reduction of all statements of relationship within the social field to mathematical forms is the logical result of applying natural-science methods to the study of social phenomena.

Case-analysis, on the other hand, is the natural outgrowth of the earlier developments in the social sciences which were, for a long time, somewhat isolated from the natural sciences.

<sup>1</sup> Consult Ezekiel, *Correlation Analysis*, for an exposition of the many methods for measuring relationship.

In case-analysis one can see the culmination of a long endeavor to get away from the uniqueness of relations between events of historical analysis of the narrative type and to find a way of abstracting in qualitative terms.

And yet there is reason to believe that a combination of methods resulting from cross-fertilization of the social and the natural sciences will be beneficial in the social field. This is partly due to the fact that case-analysis needs to be used with some caution. Some patterns are much more important than others, because much more frequently encountered. Neither is there any assurance that all, or even the most important, patterns have been discovered unless the sample is large and judiciously selected.

On the other hand, the statistical methods result in too high a degree of abstraction if used alone. They are, however, most useful in determining the relative importance between patterns discovered through case-analysis, and in insuring that the process of sampling has been adequate. Statistical methods are also useful in measuring the relationship between the processes or patterns discovered through the use of case-analysis.

The method of case-analysis and the statistical methods are not, therefore, mutually exclusive, but instead are complementary. The method of case-analysis reveals processes and patterns which serve as more realistic units than quantitative segments measured in space and time; while the statistical methods provide a basis for evaluating the importance of particular processes with reference to one another, a technique for testing the adequacy of samples, and procedures for measuring the relationships between processes.

What is the status of the use of these two methods in the

study of the family may now be determined with reference to the theoretical possibilities implied in these methods. Since the methods of research have varied in terms of the standpoint from which the family was approached, i.e., in terms of organization and disorganization, division of the analysis into these two divisions seems advisable.

#### STUDIES IN FAMILY ORGANIZATION

On the whole the methods most used in the study of family organization have been the historical. The earlier type of historical analysis was the narrative, though this was often interwoven with the comparative.<sup>1</sup> Other studies were exclusively the application of the comparative method.<sup>2</sup> No study of the family from a strictly natural-history point of view, however, has yet been produced. It is true that many of the studies, such as that of Westermarck, in which the method has been the comparative, verge on the method of natural history, but in each instance the predilection for origins and the evolutionary theory prevents the strict production of a natural-history account.

There are, of course, realistic descriptions of family organization under varying social conditions. The best of these, perhaps, are the productions of anthropologists who have abandoned the evolutionary point of view and contented themselves with monographic studies. From the standpoint of method, however, these descriptive accounts are incomplete, representing as they do the preliminary step in research, viz., the collection of data.

<sup>1</sup> Goodsell, *The Family as a Social and Educational Institution*, is a notable example of the combination of these two methods, whereas Calhoun, *A History of the American Family*, relies exclusively upon the narrative method.

<sup>2</sup> The most outstanding example is Westermarck, *History of Human Marriage*.

And while monographic studies of the family provide materials for analysis, their usefulness is somewhat restricted by the limitations of the type of data. For the most part the descriptive categories employed are those of common sense and relate to the cultural aspects of family organization. Only the more formal elements in family organization, therefore, receive attention. These accounts are, in other words, institutional studies rather than studies in human nature.

Thomas and Znaniecki, on the other hand, have presented a more complete study of family organization, using the method of case-analysis.<sup>1</sup> In this analysis the Polish peasant family is portrayed as an instrument of informal control, and an explanation of behavior is presented in terms of attitudes, values, and wishes.<sup>2</sup> Their method, however, is also open to the criticism that it results in what is chiefly a concrete description of familial practices. In so far as explanation is introduced it takes the form of relating the data to conceptual schemes derived from the study of human behavior in general, rather than growing directly out of the facts of familial organization.

Yet there is no study of the contemporary American family which shows as great an appreciation and understanding of the nature of family organization as does *The Polish Peasant*. All of which causes one to suspect that the study of family organization is still in the stage where insight and acute observation count for more than careful adherence to the demands of scientific method.

<sup>1</sup> *The Polish Peasant*, particularly I, 87-128.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Burgess, "Topical Summaries of Current Literature: The Family," *Amer. Jour. Soc.*, XXXII (July, 1926), 108.

## STUDIES IN FAMILY DISORGANIZATION

Whereas the methods of research in the study of family organization have been restricted almost exclusively to the case-study group, the methods used in the study of family disorganization have been almost as decidedly restricted to the statistical. For the most part, however, statistical analysis has been of a relatively simple sort, involving little more than the tabulation process. Such tables as resulted have been taken to show: (1) the extent of the problem, (2) the relative importance of the various factors in the problem, and (3) the historical trends or tendencies.

The extent of the problem has been shown by comparing the volume of family disorganization in one area with that in another, or by totaling the number of cases for several areas. These comparisons of totals have been expressed either in absolute terms or in ratios. In either case the areas have been political units. There are, as has been shown,<sup>1</sup> certain difficulties in the use of either the absolute figures or a ratio in representing the extent of family disorganization. The comparison of the absolute figures themselves assumes a homogeneity of population which does not exist. Neither does it take into account the variations in legal definitions and in administrative situations, nor the variations in the potentialities for family disorganization. The reduction of these measures to ratios is an attempt, though not entirely successful, to correct the latter difficulty, without, however, any change in the former.

The relative importance of various factors in the problem has generally been shown in percentages of the whole. These results have been inadequate, as far as the statistical pro-

<sup>1</sup> See above, chap. viii, also the author's *Family Disorganization*, chaps. ii, iii, and iv.



cedure is concerned, for two reasons: the smallness of the sample and the absence of a control group. The smallness of the sample has led to conclusions based upon differences in percentages which, if the theory of sampling were applied, would be of no significance. The absence of a control group has led to the assumption that the characteristics of the sample were abnormal, the truth of which may in many instances be questioned.

Historical trends have been shown both in absolute figures and in ratios. Disregarding certain fallacies where the absolute figures are stated, as well as the inadequacies of the ratios used, no account has been taken of the changes which have been introduced as modifications either in legislation or in the administration of the law. The result is that there is no assurance that the same thing is being measured in each instance, i.e., from year to year.

Relationships, on the whole, have been disregarded as far as the statistical analysis was concerned, to be brought in through the back door of impressionistic methods. The utilization of the methods of correlation analysis, however, is not the open sesame to the discovery of relationships. And this because by no degree of statistical refinement can inaccuracies inherent in the utilization of common-sense concepts be rendered impotent.

It is, in fact, at this point that the difficulties in the way of scientific study of both the organization and the disorganization of the family merge. What is needed is a set of concepts in terms of which the family may be resolved into sets of relationships. These concepts, however, cannot be manufactured out of hand, but must be based upon the discovery of similarity in many concrete family situations. Further-

more, a system of concepts to be satisfactory must harmonize with a well-defined theory of human nature, since family experiences constitute one series of behavior situations. This latter requirement is particularly important, since the nature of one's observations with which one starts his analysis is dependent upon his preconceptions, as has already been pointed out. Common-sense preconceptions lead only to common-sense classification and generalization.

A theory of human nature which may be considered a candidate for the adoption of the family researcher is the one implicit in the discussions throughout this book. This theory conceives of human nature as developing out of social interaction. The individual is born with a complex of predispositions—reflexes, instincts, random movements, capacities—all of which are either highly modifiable or can be reorganized into a large range of patterns. There are, of course, limits to the modifiability of these elements of original nature, but the limitations of social contacts ordinarily obscures these limits so that they remain hypothetical in character. Cultural patterns and human interaction modify original nature almost from the moment of birth. And while some account needs to be taken of the hereditary character of the individual, much more attention than has frequently been customary needs to be given to the influence of cultural practices and the rôle of the individual in the group.

The idea of interaction is, therefore, a key concept to the study of the family. The family as a realm of interaction constitutes a basic conception which promises to lead to more objective study of both the organization and the disorganization of the family. From this point of view the goal of research will be to secure conceptual schemes describing

the relationships between various elements in the interaction process. Beginnings in this direction have already been made in the analysis of tensions, family patterns, processes of accommodation, and domestic-discord sequences.

There is, however, a need for more preliminary work in the definition of elements in the process of interaction, whether these be types of personalities, wishes, attitudes, or what not. There is at present, for example, no adequate classification of personalities, wishes, or attitudes. An important part of future research, therefore, should be devoted to the discovery and definition of suitable classificatory terms into which interactional complexes may be broken up. Description of relational complexes will naturally follow, leading to the formulation of laws or abstract relational schemes such that concrete situations of family interaction may be identified with these schemes in such a way that predictions of future interaction may be made.

For some time to come it is likely that the methods of case-study, particularly case-analysis, will be most profitably used in family research. In time, however, statistical methods will undoubtedly play a more important rôle in analysis, providing as they do a higher degree of abstraction. In this complementary rôle, statistical methods will provide necessary techniques for correlating the results of case-study with the number system. Accordingly, units growing out of case-study will take the place of those of common sense which have previously made a farce of the accuracies of statistical analysis.

## SUGGESTED READINGS

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## CHAPTER XIV

### PROBLEMS FOR RESEARCH

In formulating problems for research in the field of the family, the writer has been motivated by the desire to impress the student with the tentativeness of present-day knowledge of the family and to stimulate research on the part of the seasoned researcher as well as the student. This twofold aim has made it imperative, therefore, that research problems be formulated in varying degrees of difficulty and complexity.<sup>1</sup>

The organization of research problems represents, accordingly, a radical departure from that customarily found in textbooks. No conventional exercises have been included, because it was thought that the student would learn more by prosecuting such pieces of research, either individually or in groups, as he is capable of handling. Furthermore, research problems are classified according to a logical order not wholly identical with the chapter headings. This is due to the fact that some chapters cover ranges somewhat outside the research field, whereas others represent subareas within a larger division.

#### I. THE ORGANIZATION OF THE FAMILY

Study and understanding of the organization of the family are, of course, dependent upon the isolation of factors or

<sup>1</sup> Problems have been worked out with the idea of suggesting the procedure of research in general. In most if not in all cases it will be necessary to work out the details. Frequently the problems are such as to require a great deal of time or to introduce difficulties if worked upon by one individual, in which case parts may be parceled out to several individuals and the data assembled into a group report.

aspects in order that the whole may be resolved into its constituent parts. And yet each piece of research must and will contribute something to the understanding of the family as a whole, if it be worthy the name of research. Tentatively, these aspects may be differentiated as follows: (1) human nature and the family, (2) institutional aspects of the family, (3) family patterns and processes, and (4) the family and the development of personality.

#### I. HUMAN NATURE AND THE FAMILY

1. Ask a group of friends or acquaintances to write down for you what there is in their own family relations which cannot be had elsewhere. Classify your replies. Do you find that any of the classifications of functions of the family suffice?

2. Ask the same group canvassed in problem 1 to get the same information from one parent. Compare replies of the two groups, i.e., the parents and the children, for evidence of changes in the functions of the family within a generation.

3. Construct a schedule for the study of the influence of the course of study in college upon the attitudes of students toward marriage and family life. Present the schedule to a representative group of students in all parts of the school. Classify replies by majors, subjects in which largest number of hours have been taken, etc., to determine whether or not there are any differences in attitudes of one group of students in comparison with another.

4. Draw up a questionnaire in which you list various common attitudes toward religion, politics, and social relations. Ask a group of students to check each attitude both in terms of whether he has it now or had it when he came to

college. Tabulate the results in such a way as to show whatever changes there have been as the consequence of leaving home and going to college. If the group is large enough, replies can be further classified by college year, and comparisons made to determine whether changes are sudden or continuous.

5. Through interviews, the use of schedules, or case-histories determine if there is any relationship between sex and the attitudes of individuals toward marriage and family life. If both married and unmarried persons are included in the study, account of this should be taken as well as of sex differences.

6. Work out some objective scale for measuring the relative degrees of *rapprochement* between husbands and wives. Also formulate a series of questions designed to bring out differences between husband and wife; age, religion, interest, race, etc. Secure returns by having couples fill out schedules or questionnaires, or consult case-records of social agencies. What relationship do you find between family stability in terms of the degree of *rapprochement* and individual differences?

7. Determine what, if any, are the differences between social groups with regard to motives for marriage. Groups studied may be occupational groups, economic classes, religious groups, etc. A list of motives may be secured through case-studies of friends and acquaintances, following which a schedule or questionnaire may be drawn up and circulated among a larger and more representative group.

8. The same method as that used in problem 7 may be followed in securing data for comparison between college and non-college groups in order to determine the influence of college training upon motives.

9. Work out a questionnaire or schedule in which you set

forth as wide a variety of attitudes toward marriage and family life as possible, and ask members of two generations to indicate their attitudes. This can be done by sending the forms to married couples, asking each person to return a schedule and also the names and addresses of their parents. Then send similar schedules to either set of parents. (If you can have the couples themselves secure the information from their parents, this will facilitate the matter.)

10. Using the same descriptions of attitudes as in problem 9, circulate a schedule among families who once lived in the country but who have moved to the city. Take only those families who have lived in the city a reasonable length of time and ask them to indicate their attitudes both now and before leaving the country. What changes do you find resulting from the movement?

11. Secure case-studies describing the development of parental sentiments in both fathers and mothers. Beginnings should be looked for in the early lives of the persons, especially in their relations to brothers and sisters. Do you find any striking differences between the sexes, and if so what seems to be the explanation?

## 2. INSTITUTIONAL ASPECTS OF THE FAMILY

1. Make a list of current social practices connected with courtship and marriage (e.g., linen showers, dowries, etc.) of a generation ago by interviewing members of your parents' age and comparing these with similar practices of persons your own age.

2. Ask friends or acquaintances to describe for you any traditional practices or beliefs which have been handed down from generation to generation within their own families. How have these traditions influenced the behavior of the members of the family?



3. Compare the activities of the members of the family within the home where residence is in small-apartment areas with those in single-house areas. What light do your data throw upon the problem of the relation of social change, as indicated by the type of home, to family life?

4. Secure either through interviews or case-studies descriptions of the traditions of family life in various sections of the United States. How do you account for these variations?

5. Interview two groups of persons: those of your own generation who are married and those of your parents' generation. Determine what were the family ceremonials in both groups. How do they differ?

6. Further comparisons, similar to those in problem 5, may be made by taking families in different parts of the city, with the idea both of determining whether change in ceremonials has been greater in some communities than in others, among certain racial groups, etc., and of discovering how diverse are the ceremonial patterns in different localities and between different racial or national groups.

7. Similar comparisons to those suggested in problems 5 and 6 may be made of urban and rural groups. (A questionnaire may be drawn up to be used in connection with each of the last three problems, if that seems a more promising procedure.)

8. Changes in American wedding ceremonies may be determined by securing a group of descriptions of wedding ceremonies in which the persons participated either as guests or as principals. Members of two generations may be included in the study by interviewing young couples regarding the details of their own weddings, and then securing comparable descriptions from their parents.

9. Have a group of friends, all of whom now live away from their parents, describe for you, or fill out a schedule covering similar facts, the ceremonial practices which were common within their families as children. Ask them also to indicate the type of relations which now prevail between themselves and the other members of the family group. Classify replies in terms either of the ceremonials presented in each case or of groups of related ceremonials, and determine if the relations of the persons to the members of their families have been in any way affected by family ceremonials.

10. Draw up a schedule or questionnaire indicating some of the commonly held attitudes toward marriage and the family and also the ceremonials which characterize family life. Ask a group of persons to indicate both their attitudes at present and the ceremonials prevalent in the family group in which each grew up. From these data determine the relationship, if any, between present attitudes and past ceremonial practices.

11. Work out a schedule of activities which are generally performed in the home, such as cooking, purchasing groceries, washing dishes, etc., and ask a group of married friends to indicate whether these are performed by the husband, by the wife, or shared, now and with reference to their earlier family groups. (If a higher degree of differentiation is desired, the following gradation may be used: [a] performed by husband, [b] performed by both but chiefly by the husband, [c] performed by both about equally, [d] performed by both but chiefly by the wife, and [e] performed wholly by the wife.) What changes do you find within a generation?

12. What have been the changes in the functioning of

community control mechanisms upon the behavior of the individual within the family? Work out statements of probable courses of behavior in the family and ask members of two generations to indicate how these courses might be modified by community pressure exercised through gossip, the larger-family group, the church, etc. Secure these data from both a group of young married couples and their parents.

### 3. FAMILY PATTERNS AND PROCESSES

1. Ask your friends to supply you with descriptions of family patterns in their own families. A set of questions should be drawn up to serve as a guide in writing up these descriptions.

2. Classify a group of families with which you are familiar by type of family pattern. (The descriptions secured in problem 1 may be used.) At the same time make note of the area of residence. Do you find any connection between type of residential area and the family pattern?

3. Draw up a questionnaire designed to bring out data showing the family pattern of married persons now and as a child. What changes in types do you find within a generation?

4. Make a study of courtship by asking your friends to write descriptions of their own. If possible, have both husband and wife write their descriptions independently.

5. By using a questionnaire or schedule expand problem 4 to include a variety of racial groups. (This can be done as a co-operative venture, each person getting data from that racial group of which he is a part.) How do you account for the variations in the patterns of courtship?

6. Chart the relative positions on a vertical scale of the various members in as many families as you know. From

these data make up a table showing the positions of the children with reference to sex and order of birth. Make up another table showing the relative positions of husband and wife with reference to each other. (This charting process may be expanded to include the possibility of a person having a different position with reference to some activities than with others.)

7. Repeat the process described in problem 6, differentiating between those families of your parents' generation and those of your own generation. What changes do you find? (This problem may be expanded by the use of a schedule or questionnaire.)

8. Collect case-studies showing the following processes of accommodation: (a) subordination-superordination, (b) differentiation of functions, (c) compromise, (d) mutual toleration, (e) mutual redefinition of the situation. Analyze these with the idea of determining, if possible, what are the conditions under which these mechanisms develop and in what groups each is most frequently to be found.

9. Determine what mechanisms of control are most frequently used in a group of families. Have members of the same group describe as many situations in which they were subjected to social control, both within and outside the family, as they can readily recall. Compare the frequencies with which the various mechanisms occur within and outside the family.

10. Select a group of fifty young married persons at random from among your city acquaintances. Secure from them (a) the number of years they had known each other before marriage, (b) under what circumstances they met each other, (c) whether or not they knew each other's families prior to their courtship, (d) whether they knew each other's families

before marriage and if so for how long. Secure answers to the same questions from fifty married persons living in a rural community. Compare.

11. Collect a group of case-studies from families that have moved from the country to the city. Classify by types of adjustment and change in family relations. How do you explain these changes?

12. Collect and compare case-studies of suburban and urban families in terms of family patterns, size, mechanisms of accord, ceremonials, etc. In what respects is the suburban family like the urban family? Different?

13. Secure a group of case-studies or replies to a questionnaire describing the attitudes of individuals toward marriage and family relations. Obtain also the number and sex of children and analyze your results in terms of the size of the families represented. Is there any relationship between attitudes and size of family?

14. Compare the processes of accommodation in cases where there has been intermarriage with a group where there has not. What types of conflict most frequently arise in each group and how are these situations solved?

15. Secure descriptions of marriage ceremonies and classify into types, such as orthodox religious, liberal religious, secular, etc. Divide a group of cases coming to a family-welfare agency into family-disorganization cases and those in which there is not disorganization and compare in terms of the type of marriage ceremony. (A questionnaire or schedule may be used to obtain data instead of drawing upon case-records.)

16. Secure through the use of interviews, schedules, questionnaires, or life-histories such facts as will reveal the family pattern, especially as it involves division of labor, of families

where the wives work outside the home. Do the same for families in which the wives do not work outside the home and compare the results from the two groups. How is the organization of the family affected by the employment of married women?

17. Construct a schedule or a questionnaire for the study of the relationship between the ceremonial practices in families and the various types of family patterns. Have these forms filled in by some group, preferably married persons. Those interested in going into more detail than the forms call for may be encouraged to write up case-studies of their own experiences. Analyze the returns to determine the relationship between family ceremonials and family patterns.

18. Make contacts with a group of married women who are gainfully employed and ask them to write up their experiences, especially with reference to the attitudes of friends toward them, what they do with their earnings, attitudes of their husbands and children toward their working, etc. Supplement their own accounts with interviews of those persons in close contact, especially their husbands, relatives, and close friends, to determine to what extent the descriptions of attitudes on the part of the wives are real. How do these experiences affect family relations and the personalities of working married women?

19. Work out a schedule of the most commonly experienced attitudes toward family life, such as common or individual bank accounts, woman's duties and prerogatives, etc., and submit to a group of married women who are employed and a group not employed. What, if any, are the differences between the two groups?

20. Compare the family organizations of two groups of families: (a) those in which the wives work, and (b) those in

which the wives are not gainfully employed. These data may be secured through any of the methods of study generally used and may profitably emphasize the processes of accommodation, especially subordination-superordination, and the type of family patterns. What effect has the employment of wives upon family organization?

21. Compare the patterns of family organization and the processes of accommodation involved in the adjustment between husband and wife in some of the more important national and racial groups: (a) the Jewish group, (b) the Italian group, (c) the Polish group, (d) the Negro group, etc. Show how these variations are the result of the different cultural backgrounds of the respective groups. (Data may best be secured through interviews and case-studies.)

22. Construct a schedule designed to determine what are the recreational interests and activities of both husband and wife. Which of these are shared by both and which are exclusively either the wife's or the husband's? Include in the schedules also an index of family stability, such as wholly satisfied, satisfied most of the time, about equally satisfied and dissatisfied, dissatisfied most of the time, completely dissatisfied. Secure responses to the schedule either by interviewing married individuals or by asking them to return anonymously the completed forms.

#### 4. THE FAMILY AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONALITY

1. Analyze your attitudes toward persons in authority, such as teachers, priests, judges, etc., in comparison with that toward your parents as far as control of behavior is concerned. Have a group of friends do likewise. Do you find any connection between negativism in social relations and in the family?

2. Make a study of family rôles by comparing the order of birth with the rôle in the family. Classify personalities into types and draw up a table to show the relation between (a) order of birth and personality types, and (b) rôle in the family and personality types.

3. Ask a group of friends to indicate their occupations or occupational preferences. Find out also the occupations of their fathers, mothers, and important relatives who may have influenced their choice. What relationship do you find between the occupational choices of the older group and their children?

4. Expand problem 3 to include the occupations of the grandparents of the persons. Compare the relationship between occupational choices of parents and grandparents with that between parents and children. Do your results indicate any change in the social inheritance of occupational choices in two generations?

5. Make contacts with persons who were "only" children in their families and ask them to write their life-histories. Analyze these to determine how a definite type of personality is developed, i.e., that of the "only child."

6. Collect a group of life-histories where there have been projections of parental ambitions or vocations upon the offspring. Ask each person to describe in detail how his parent or parents attempted to realize their ambitions or vocational preferences through him and the effect this had upon the development of his personality.

7. Secure life-histories of persons recounting whether or not at one time they felt they had been adopted by their parents. Classify accordingly, to determine the relationship between the adopted-child complex and the size of the family, the child's order of birth, rank, and sex.



8. Collect a group of life-histories of persons who were youngest, oldest, "in-between," and "only" children in their respective families. What rôles do they play at the present time in their group contacts? How has the family rôle been modified, if at all, and under what circumstances?

9. Ask a group of friends to describe for you the nature of the conflicts between themselves and their parents. Secure also, either through written documents from the persons themselves or through interviews, descriptive data on the personalities of each person and how he was influenced by conflicts with his parents.

10. Divide the group of case-studies secured in problem 9 into those where the person grew up under rural conditions and those where the early life was spent in urban areas. What differences do you find both in the nature of parent-child conflict and in its relationship to personality development?

11. Ask a group of friends or acquaintances to write out for you a complete description of the ceremonial practices in vogue within their families as a child. Secure from each also data bearing upon both the development of personality and its present organization and traits. Classify personalities into types and see if there is any relationship to the ceremonial practices in the family.

12. Secure either through interviews or by the use of a questionnaire a characterization of the general rôle of the child in the family, and his rôle with particular reference to family ceremonials. This may be done by having persons indicate their ranks in the family circle and also with reference to each of the ceremonial practices, or by asking for a more complete description of both the rôle in the family and that in ceremonial activities. What relationship, if any, do you find between the two sets of rôles?

13. Analyze the effect of the position of the child in the family—order of birth, rank, etc.—upon school adjustment in terms of scholarship and his rôle in school and playground activities. Secure data through interviews with the individual, his parents, teachers, and playmates, and by consulting school records, whether of grade school, high school, college, or any combination of these. (Life-histories and schedules may be used along with the interviews or as substitutes.)

14. Draw up a schedule in which you describe the range of significant attitudes toward marriage and the family, such as desire for companionship, status of individual's family as a factor in selection, number of children desired, relations between members those of equality or not, etc. Also include questions relative to the size of the family in which the person grew up, and his rank and order of birth in it. Secure returns from some interested group and analyze to determine the relationship between the attitudes indicated and size of family, rank, and order of birth.

15. Secure a group of case-studies describing the rôle of the person in his family as a child and his attitudes at the present time. In determining the relationship between the rôle of the child in the family and the development of the pattern of life, consideration may be taken of the following: (a) jealousy between children, (b) age differences between children and rôles, (c) relationship between rank in family and that in clubs, (d) relation of rôle to type of business activity, position, etc.

## II. DISORGANIZATION OF THE FAMILY

Research in the disorganization of the family has generally been directed toward discovering methods by which these relations might be rehabilitated. Yet in spite of this very practical aim in such research, light has been thrown

inevitably upon the organization of the family itself since the abnormal is but an exaggeration of the normal in family relations. From this point of view, therefore, studies in family disorganization have a more fundamental character than would appear at first sight.

In the classification of problems in the disorganization of the family, accordingly, it is highly desirable that this fundamental character of such studies be kept in mind as well as the fact that the essential nature of family disorganization remains the same throughout regardless of whatever groups the problems may be broken up into. Furthermore, the inclusion of problems in the treatment of family disorganization is justified even in terms of social psychology since it is only through therapeutic processes that the validity of one's theories can be tested and checked. Tentatively, therefore, the following classification is adopted: (1) divorce and desertion, (2) domestic discord, (3) family disorganization and the child, and (4) the treatment of family problems.

#### I. DIVORCE AND DESERTION

1. Select a group of counties which have experienced a declining population for at least three or four decades. Calculate divorce trends and compare with those for the states from which the counties have been selected.

2. Repeat the process described in problem 1 for a group of counties showing a high rate of increase in population. What relation, if any, do you find between increasing population and divorce trends?

3. Construct tables from the Bureau of the Census reports on marriage and divorce to show the frequencies in the use of each of the grounds for divorce by year periods selected at five-year intervals. Compare trends for rural areas,

urban areas, and the country as a whole. If there have been any decided changes, try to discover the explanation by securing case-studies of persons' attitudes toward the use of the several grounds, selecting individuals representing different areas, different generations, etc.

4. Trace the movements of families coming to a case-work agency in terms of whether movement in each case has been into areas of higher or lower disorganization. Divide the cases into two groups: (a) the domestic-discord group and (b) the non-domestic-discord group and compare.

5. Secure case-studies of families who have moved into areas of higher disorganization and compare with those in which the movement has been into areas of lower disorganization to determine what, if any, change in conduct followed each type of move.

6. Obtain from court records the names of persons who have been recently divorced. Interview these persons, or their attorneys, and compare your findings with the data in their certificates of evidence. How much variance do you find between the two sets of facts in each case?

7. From the Bureau of Census reports on marriage and divorce, draw up tables showing the distribution of divorce cases by years of married life for every fifth year as far as possible from 1887 to the present. Calculate the mean years of married life for each year-period and construct a chart showing the trend of these means. How do you interpret your findings? (This study can be made more elaborate by differentiating between urban and rural areas, sections of the country, etc.)

8. Select at random a group of first marriages and compare with two groups of marriages: one in which one party had previously been divorced and the second in which both

persons had previously been divorced. In selecting cases the distribution of years of married life should be kept constant for all three groups. Work out a method of measuring success in marriage by asking each person to indicate whether he is very well satisfied, fairly well satisfied, equally satisfied and dissatisfied, more dissatisfied than satisfied, and wholly dissatisfied. Secure replies to schedules or questionnaire anonymously.

9. Secure data from records of a family case-work agency from two types of cases: (*a*) those in which there is evidence of family disorganization—desertion, non-support, domestic infelicity—and (*b*) those in which problems of family disorganization do not appear. Compare in terms of such items as age differences between husband and wife, religious differences, differences in nationality, etc. What bearing have your findings upon the question of the causes of family disorganization?

10. Interview a group of persons who have been divorced to determine what are the ways in which adjustments are made following separation and divorce. Ask individuals who indicate willingness to do so to write out their experiences and attitudes for you. What effect has divorce upon the personalities of the individuals involved?

11. If there were children in the group studied in problem 10, find out all you can about how they adjusted to the situation of having their parents divorced. These data may be had by interviewing the children themselves (if they are old enough to be interviewed successfully), talking to their parents and to others in close contact with the children. These data may be supplemented with interviews of older persons whose parents were divorced or data secured in this way may be used in lieu of those obtained by the former method.

Supplement interviews with autobiographical materials whenever possible.

12. Correlate the ratio between marriage and divorce for a particular area with some index of business conditions, such as index of wholesale prices, bank clearings, etc. Either yearly or monthly figures may be used. Distinction between urban and rural areas may be made to determine if the relationship between the two series is the same under contrasting conditions.

13. Secure data on family disorganization by sorting cases of divorce or non-support or both by natural areas (political areas may be substituted). Do the same thing for suicides. Calculate rates by taking the ratios between the number of family-disorganization cases to the population and that between suicides and the population for each area. Correlate the results to determine the relationship between family disorganization and suicide.

14. Collect addresses of persons applying for marriage licenses within a period of time (preferably in units of one year) and calculate marriage rates (ratio of marriage to population) by natural areas. Do the same for divorce cases and correlate results. What relationship do you find between marriage and divorce?

15. Count the number of divorce complaints by months within a particular area for a period of years. Do the same for any or all of the following series representing social disorganization: (a) adult arrests, (b) juvenile arrests, (c) arrests for sex offenses, (d) arrests for drunkenness, (e) arrests for illegal sale of liquor, (f) suicides, (g) illegitimate births, (h) changes in residence, (i) telephone calls, and (j) newspaper circulation. Correlate each of these series with the divorce series. (Either simple or multiple correlation may

be used.) How is family disorganization related to social disorganization?

16. Problem 15 may be studied also in terms of the local areas of a large community. In this case rates should be calculated upon the basis of year-counts in ratio to the population of a given area.

## 2. DOMESTIC DISCORD

1. Collect a group of case-records of domestic discord and classify by type tensions. These case-studies may be descriptions of families with which you or your friends are familiar.

2. Read a group of case-records of a social-work agency. Classify by tensions and construct a table to show the relative frequencies of each type. If no opportunities for securing case-records are open, newspaper accounts of divorce cases may be substituted. Compare results with those secured in problem 1.

3. Collect a group of case-studies from persons who are involved in domestic discord, either through interviews or through autobiographical accounts, to show the effect of conflict upon personality. What is the relationship between domestic discord and the disorganization of personality?

4. Ask a group of married couples to write out for you descriptions of situations in their married relations in which they experienced either unusual accord and identification of interests, or decided discord and irritation. Classify both the accord and the discord situations to determine whether or not the same essential factors operated in both groups.

5. Secure a group of case-studies of families in which there is domestic discord, either by interviewing the members, by

reading case-work records, or by securing autobiographical materials. Classify patterns of discord by breaking up each case into elements in terms of the interests involved in each of the conflict situations and showing the sequence of appearance.

6. Collect a group of case-studies of domestic discord either through interviews, through records, or through autobiographical documents and classify by tensions and by a variety of factors, such as years of married life; number of children by age and sex; differences in age, religion, recreational activities, intellectual interests, ambitions, etc. Is there any relationship between these factors and the type of tension?

7. Interview a group of persons who have been divorced to determine the type of family pattern prior to divorce. For each person interviewed select a married person living in the same area—preferably at the same street address or close by—and interview this person also to determine the family pattern. Does domestic discord seem more common to one type of family pattern than to another? (Persons who have been deserted or where there is known to be domestic discord may be substituted for divorced persons.)

8. Compare family organization in two groups of cases: one of disorganized families and one of organized families, taking into account such factors as parental preferences, patterns of life, view toward marriage relations, subordination-superordination, etc. This may be done by obtaining case-studies of families of both kinds, whether of friends or acquaintances, or a schedule may be drawn up and distributed to a group of families, including some device to determine whether each is organized or disorganized.



9. Work out a schedule or questionnaire to be used in making a study of happy and unhappy marriages. Include in this an index of the degree to which the marriage is satisfactory. Also ask for data concerning factors which have been thought to have some bearing upon the success of marriage, such as age, religion, nationality, number of children, sex and age of children, etc. Secure replies from a fairly homogeneous group.

### 3. FAMILY DISORGANIZATION AND THE CHILD

1. Compare the attitudes of children toward their parents in families without contacts with divorce or domestic-relations courts with a group in which the parents have had these contacts. How do the two groups differ?

2. Select a group of individuals, about equally divided between those who grew up in discordant families and those whose families were not involved in domestic discord, and determine the attitudes toward marriage and family life. What has been the effect of domestic discord upon attitudes?

3. Take a group of case-records in which there is, or has been, domestic discord and investigate thoroughly the family situation in which each person grew up. Is there any evidence of domestic discord in two generations, and if so how much alike are the patterns of conflict?

4. Select a group of persons to study who seem to enjoy seeing other persons suffer. Secure from them through interviews and life-history documents facts about their family relations which may throw light upon the origins of sadistic behavior. To what extent is this sort of behavior the outgrowth of family disorganization?

5. Secure a group of life-histories from persons who have grown up in families where there was domestic discord. Differentiate patterns of conflict and determine if there is any relationship between these and the life-patterns of the individuals.

6. Take two groups of children, one of which consists of those from families not involved in domestic discord, and the other group from families where there is conflict between parents. Determine the social adjustment of both groups in terms of school grades, position and rôle in play groups, etc., and compare. What do you find to be the relationship between domestic discord and social adjustment?

7. For the same groups used in problem 6 determine the attitudes of children toward their parents, especially as these involve preferences for the father or mother with reference to the sex of the child, and relations between the children. What differences do you find between the two groups?

8. Select a group of delinquency cases from the records of a social agency or court and divide into two subgroups: (*a*) cases in which there is no domestic discord, and (*b*) those in which there is domestic discord. How do they differ? What do your findings seem to indicate about the relation of domestic discord to delinquency?

9. Select two groups of individuals for study as follows: for each delinquent person select a non-delinquent who lives in the same neighborhood, is of the same age, of the same nationality, of the same sex, and a member of the same-size family. Compare the two groups in terms of the order of birth and rank of each individual in their respective families.

4. THE TREATMENT OF FAMILY PROBLEMS<sup>1</sup>

1. Ask fifty persons who are now married, or have been, for their recommendations on how to prevent family quarrels. Ascertain also whether the person is at present happily married, dissatisfied, or divorced. Do you find any relationship between the recommendations and success in marriage?

2. Visit several sessions of your local court of domestic relations. Make records of the cases heard, writing down all you can find out about the circumstances bringing the family into court and the methods by which the situation has been handled. Classify your cases both by type tensions and by methods of treatment. Evaluate the effects of court treatment in terms of definite criteria indicating adjustment of couples in domestic relations.

3. Read a group of case-records secured from a family case-work agency. Classify cases by tensions or other patterns of domestic discord and by treatment techniques. What, if any, relationship do you find between the patterns of domestic discord and the methods of treatment?

4. Set up an objective method of determining the effectiveness of treatment in the cases read in problem 3. Is there any relation between the techniques used and the effectiveness of treatment?

5. Select at random from the records of a court of domestic relations a group of cases to be followed up. Interview these individuals to determine what, if any, adjustment has been made to domestic discord. Classify cases in terms of the types of conflict. Repeat the process with a group of

<sup>1</sup> The treatment of family problems requires a skilful technique which only the mature and experienced expert can be expected to possess. Since research in treatment is largely experimental in approach and should be done only by experts, the following problems are intended to serve as simple exercises within the limitations of the student's equipment.

family case-work families. Compare to determine the effect of court of domestic relations contact upon family relations.

6. Repeat the process described in problem 5 except this time take cases which have been treated by ministers. Compare the effectiveness of ministerial methods with that of the other two types of treatment, family case-work, and court of domestic relations.

7. Secure records of interviews in which there has been an attempt to change attitudes either by recording your own interviews or by getting others to do so. Analyze to determine the mechanisms used and formulate objective criteria of effectiveness which can be applied. What mechanisms are most effective?



## APPENDIX



## APPENDIX

### A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY<sup>\*</sup>

#### I. THE FAMILY IN MODERN SOCIETY

##### I. EVOLUTION AND HISTORY OF THE FAMILY

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<sup>\*</sup> Titles in this Bibliography have been selected with the idea of including representative books and articles covering the range of writings on the family implied in the classification. Selection of a particular title does not mean that the compiler considers it to be of high rank, but only that the writing contains something of merit in terms of the level achieved in that particular class. Furthermore, titles are not repeated, but are placed in that division in which they most appropriately fall. Such classification does not, therefore, preclude their bearing upon other divisions within the classification. To facilitate further the selection of titles for the person who has neither the time nor the inclination to examine all the references within a division, what the compiler considers the more important writings have been marked with an asterisk. For more comprehensive bibliographies see Howard, *The Family and Marriage*, and Calhoun, *A Social History of the American Family*. The literature since the publication of Howard's *Syllabus* in 1914 is covered in Burgess, "Topical Summaries of Current Literature: The Family," *Amer. Jour. Soc.*, XXXII (July, 1926), 104-15. These titles, however, have all been included in the present Bibliography.



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